

# A Short History of The Rucksack Club 1902 - 1939

*By Philip Brockbank & Eric Byrom*



# A SHORT HISTORY OF THE RUCKSACK CLUB

1902-1939

*written by*

*Philip Brockbank and Eric Byrom in 1977*



*Prepared for publication in 2011 by Mike Dent, Roger Booth and John Payne*

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# Introduction

*by Roger Booth*

Philip Brockbank explains in the following preface the circumstances in which this history of the Rucksack Club from 1902 to 1939 was written. As well as the “Preface”, “Part 1 - The Beginning: 1902-1918” and “Part 2 - The Club at Home: 1919-1939” were written by Brockbank and originally made available as a typewritten document only on request. Part 1 was subsequently printed in the 1977 Journal, but the much longer “Club at Home” has never been printed. The other three sections of Part 2, namely “Rockclimbing” and “Climbing Abroad” by Eric Byrom, and “Walking” by Philip Brockbank were published in the Jubilee (i.e. dated 1976) issue of the Journal under the heading of “The Rucksack Club Between the Wars”.

Three members of the Club have shared responsibility for preparing this history for publication in a single book. It is one of an informal series of books being created privately but under the auspices of the Club, and being made available to members at cost. Previous issues were reprints of the Annual Reports 1903-1905 and the first six Journals in three parts, 1907 & 1908, 1910 & 1911 and 1912 & 1913. In 2012 it is hoped to offer a history of 75 years of the London Section (updated from the article published in the 1988 Journal to celebrate its 50th anniversary) and an extended Cumulative Index to follow the publication of Journal No. 100.

Mike Dent has used OCR technology to scan the complete text from Brockbank’s original typescript and the 1976 Journal. These original Journal articles were illustrated, but the quality of printing was poor, so all illustrations in this history have been selected by Mike from the extensive collection in the Club Archives. Many of them have never been printed before.

Roger Booth’s contribution has been to proof-read the text to expunge a few eccentricities left by the OCR program, and to correct a very small number of surviving typographical errors. There has been slight reformatting to make the various sections more compatible, and three additional footnotes can be identified by initials. Otherwise the text has been left more or less as originally drafted by the authors.

John Payne then took the work of his two collaborators and turned it into the finished document, as he has done with all the previous reprints. He has sourced quotations from suitable printing companies and has been the point of contact with Lulu.com during the production, and has also dealt with the marketing of the finished book to members and handled the financial side in general.

## Biographical Notes

**Philip Brockbank** joined the Club in 1931, after his student days in the infant MUMC during which he had taken an MSc. He was responsible for the 14 issues of the Journal from 1947-60, more than any of our other Editors, and wrote 19 articles for it over a period of nearly 50 years. By profession he was a patent agent, though he served as a major in the Royal Signals during the war and was awarded an MBE.

Arthur Bullough wrote that Philip was the shyest person he had ever known, and he remained a life-long bachelor. He is the tall, thin, grey-haired and rather gaunt figure with the stern-looking demeanour often seen at the back of photos of the Club's walking parties in the post-war years. But he was friendly and gentle - in Beudy Mawr around 1960 the pre-dawn appearance of this spectre bearing mugs of tea proved a startling awakening for MUMC students who had retired to their bunks not long beforehand.

Few could go as fast or as far as Philip, and he was renowned for his innovation and meticulous planning of long walks, particularly in his native Pennines, which included the Marsden-Edale (single and double), The Four Inns, Colne-Rowsley (once solo), Moffat-Peebles, and Tan Hill-Cat & Fiddle. In 1954 he masterminded the first continuous Scottish Four-thousands, but just failed to finish with Frank Williamson. Many walks were repeated several times, and by 1965 he had been up Kinder 706 times. He experimented with methods of improving his performance, such as an expander ring in his nostrils to let in more air.

He climbed the Dufourspitze during one of his Alpine seasons with Firth Burton's circus, to which only sound people were admitted. And there are records of him climbing in Skye in the 1930s, though he preferred to second when rock-climbing.

Philip retired to Worthing in 1982 to be with his sister, and died there in 1986 aged 79

Data mainly from obituaries by Alex Ferguson and Arthur Bullough - RCJ 1986/87:63



**Eric Byrom** joined the Rucksack Club in 1936, having already been a member of the Wayfarers' Club for three years. He was Honorary Secretary of the Club for 30 years (1942-71), becoming President for 1974-75, and served as Vice-President of the BMC. He worked all his life in a bank in Manchester

Born with a right arm that was not fully effective, Eric developed great strength in his left arm and skill as a balance climber. In the impecunious days of his early twenties – often with Douglas Milner – he cut his teeth on Laddow, and then Cratcliffe and other gritstone crags. His impressive list of classic climbs, often leading, included Pigott's and Longland's in Wales, Central Buttress and Mickledore Grooves in the Lakes and a new route on Buchaille Etive Mor in 1940. He is recorded as having climbed with Colin Kirkus and Menlove Edwards, both fellow Wayfarers.



He was active in the Alps, climbing many of the major peaks more than once. These included the Zinal Rothorn, Dent Blanche, Finsteraarhorn, Grépon by the Mummery Crack and the Matterhorn (six times). His practice was to leave the bank in time to catch the Friday evening car ferry from Hull, and then drive direct to a campsite – no mean achievement with the cars and roads of those days – ready to start training the next morning on lesser climbs and peaks. He took Rucksack Club parties to the Alps for many years, and also to the Pyrenees, and even led tours of the Countrywide Holiday Association after his retirement from the bank.

As a climber in his sixties he could leave most of his contemporaries behind, but became an enthusiast for soloing in both the Britain and the Alps, where he climbed both Mönch and Eiger.

Eric died suddenly in 1979 at the early age of 69.

Data mainly from obituaries by Douglas Milner and John Allen - RCJ 1978:51



## Preface

*by Philip Brockbank*

Early in 1972 a suggestion was made to celebrate the Club's 75th birthday by publishing in its Jubilee year a history of the Club from its inception in 1902 to some date after World War II. It was to be divided into three parts:

1. From 1902 to the end of World War I in 1918.
2. Between the Wars: 1919 - 1939.
3. From 1939.

Each part was to be the joint work of two writers, to be chosen by or selected from a special sub-committee appointed to look into the whole project. In the particular plan at first considered the history was not to be limited merely to that of the Club, but was also to be related to "the changing social background" of the times, and also to the habits, traditions, and performances of British mountaineers and British mountaineering clubs in general. A book of some 100,000 words - about twice the size of an issue of the Journal - was envisaged.

But the time that members could spare for their allotted portions of the work and the rapid rise in the cost of printing prevented this ambitious scheme from being realised in time for the Club's Jubilee. Eric Byrom and I, however, being retired from our primary professions, have managed to write our own task - Part 2: "Between the Wars" - but limited to the Club itself, only referring to the kindred clubs to the extent that their actions impinged on ours, and referring to "the changing social background" not at all. Our narratives are based on as much of the nearby material - e.g. Club Minutes, Handbooks, Journals, and the recollections of fellow members - as we could lay our hands on in the short time that was left to us. Eric has covered the rock-climbing and mountaineering and I the hard-walking. Each narrative is short enough for possible publication in an extended issue of the Journal.

I have also attempted a general history - "The Club at Home" - covering such matters as the appointment and ability of officers, the Journal and its Editors, and the more important resolutions come to by the Committee, during the inter-wars period. At an early stage in the writing of it I found that I could not manage without Part 1. Not only had many of the members who were to play an active part in the inter-war years joined the Club in those early days, but it was during them that the special - and we modestly hope unique - character of the Club was developed. I therefore ventured on a shortened version of Part 1, on "The Club at Home" lines, based mainly on the old Journals and the toilsome exploration by Keith Treacher and Geof Mason of the mass of material contained in the Minutes of that period.

As even that shortened version of Part 1 runs to over 8,000 words and Part 2, "The Club at Home", to over 20,000, publication in an acceptable form in the Journal was out of the question. In any case, though the history of the climbing - and perhaps even of the hard-walking - between the wars might interest some of the younger members, they were not likely to be interested in the long bygone years of Part 1 or the unexciting domesticities of "The Club at Home".

I am indebted to Robin Gray for his invaluable help with the pen-portraits of the many members referred to in both Parts and to Ted Moss for having waded through my first drafts and pointed out many needful corrections and deletions.

THE MANDARINS

**AIR** : “The House of Peers” (‘Iolanthe’)

*John Hirst for The Rucksack Club Ladies’ Evening—April, 1924*

When first the Rucksack Club was formed—  
    (In good King Edward’s reign)  
The Mandarins made no pretence  
To mountaineering eminence,  
    Or criticism profane;  
Yet lusty did the infant grow,  
As every member ought to know.

When Herford climbed on Scafell Face,  
    And set the world aflare,  
The Mandarins were horrified  
And said such climbs should not be tried;  
    But no-one seemed to care!  
For many are the climbers who  
Have done what Herford used to do.

So though the Mandarins may wield  
    The too censorious pen,  
And dear old evergreens may itch  
To interfere in matters which  
    Are far beyond their ken,  
Yet healthy shall the club remain,  
As in King Edward’s glorious reign.

*Note - See Page 16*

# The Beginning: 1902-1918

*by Philip Brockbank*



***1. Arthur Burns.***



***2. John Entwisle.***

The Club was formed on 13th October 1902 by Arthur E. Burns and John H. Entwisle. For years they had walked the hills together, meeting fellow ramblers only on rare occasions. Whilst lunching at Pen y Gwryd during a solitary holiday in May 1901, Entwisle began to look through a copy of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Journal which he found there. His attention was arrested by a report of one of their Annual Dinners. The principal guest had been Joseph Collier, an eminent Manchester surgeon and audacious mountaineer. In his speech he had regretted that no such club as the YRC existed in Manchester. Entwisle pondered on this and discussed it with Burns; but they might have taken no further action had there not appeared in the Manchester City News during August 1902, a leader headed "In Praise of Walking Tours". The number of appreciative letters which the editor published encouraged Burns and Entwisle to send a letter to the paper which referred to that enthusiasm and suggested the formation of a Manchester club such as the Yorkshire Ramblers. This letter was published on 30th September. To their surprise and disappointment the response was not encouraging and the idea might have fallen through had not the paper published a reminder that a serious proposition might fail because of lack of support. More letters then appeared, sufficient to encourage Burns and Entwisle to call a meeting on 13th October. Some 30 persons attended it, enough to justify the

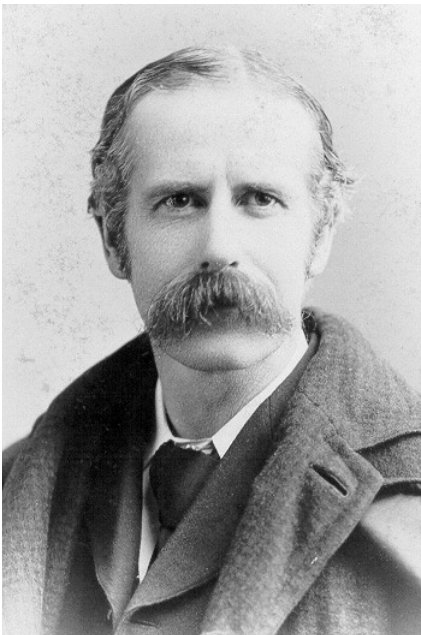
election of a sub-committee, with Burns and Entwisle as secretaries, to formulate a scheme. (For a report of the meeting see RCJ 1927:109)

This date of 13th October 1902 was taken as the initiating day of the Club. At first the title was "The Manchester Rucksack Club". Not till a year later were the "Manchester" and the Germanic dots omitted. The suggestion that the last-mentioned amendment was one of the subsidiary causes of World War I is not now taken seriously.

### **Support from the Alpine Club**

Someone else had seen their letter. They were excited to receive an answer from Professor H.B.Dixon of the University's Chemical Department - a member of the AC and particularly celebrated for his climbs on the Canadian Rockies. He invited the two to meet him at the Brazennose Club. Only one of them was able to go. He found to his surprise not only Professor Dixon but such other famous Manchester mountaineers as Joseph Collier, Charles Pilkington, and Hermann Woolley; they had come along to hear what sort of club had been born, to enable them to decide whether to support it. No special tribute appears to have been paid to whichever founder it was who met them, for convinced of the new club's bona fides they were. Perhaps they were influenced by the fact - assuming that their guest disclosed it - that two eminent Manchester solicitors were already members and serving on the initiating committee.

Dixon stood high in his profession - a CBE, an FRS, and two doctorates in which he had a world-wide reputation. He readily agreed to serve as the Club's first



**3. Harold Dixon.**



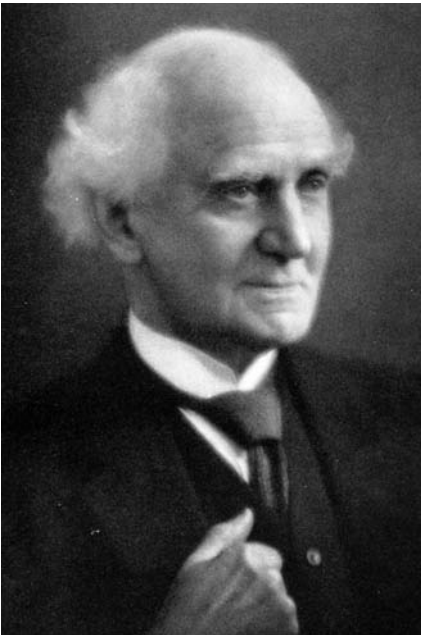
**4. Joe Collier in Action.**

President, in which position he was to manage the proceedings with kindliness and wit. As well as having also performed the good service of bringing along his three AC friends - who agreed to serve as Vice-Presidents - he not infrequently brought to Club functions as his guest other mountaineers of distinction.

Joseph Collier (of Collier's Climb, Collier's Chimney, and the Nose Direct) hardly seems to need introduction even to our modern readers. A brilliant vignette of him in action written by his pupil Wilson Hey may be found on pages 348 and 349 of our 1926 Journal. He was our second President, and died in office at the early age of 50.

Charles Pilkington, though an explorer of the Alps and a guideless climber good enough to have held the AC Presidency in 1896, is better known to us for his explorations in Skye, being in particular the first to climb the Inaccessible Pinnacle. He was our third President.

For our fourth President we chose in 1909 Alfred Hopkinson, KC, a son of Manchester and member of the AC, who had been a Vice-President since 1905. After a successful career at the Bar, he had been appointed in 1898 Principal of Owens College, the first constituent college of the newly-founded Victoria University. So highly were his services to education in general and that college in particular considered, that in 1910 he became the new University's first Vice-Chancellor. In that year, too, he was knighted - the only one of our Presidents (so far) to receive that honour whilst occupying the Presidential chair. His "striking physical appearance and great personal charm" (DNB, 1940) must have been exceptional, for over forty years later we find Wilding saying that probably "no



5. Alfred Hopkinson.



6. Philip Minor.

President of the Club lent so rare a grace and distinction to any meeting or dinner at which he presided.” (RCJ 1952:11). \*

All these Presidents took a keen interest in the Club and were ready to give lectures and speak at Dinners, whilst remaining primarily AC men. Hermann Woolley was famed for his explorations in the Caucasus, Canadian Rockies, and Lofoten Islands. He could never be persuaded to be President

Thus it was that one of the country’s foremost mountaineering clubs was initiated by two men who at the time were only rambles (which term in those days still had a dignified meaning) but who wanted to widen their experience in the hills in the mountaineering direction.

As it turned out, John Entwisle did not do much serious mountaineering even after the Club had been founded, except as a member of a party led by Wilding in the Pyrenees in 1909 (RCJ 1910:220). Long solo walks in Britain and in the hill country of southern France remained his preference. Some of his walks were of considerable enterprise if not of severity; such his crossing of Dartmoor from Okehampton to Ivybridge in 1922 (RCJ 1923:55); and his astonishing feat at the age of 82 of spending the summer of 1955 in walking the roads from Land’s End to John o’ Groats. His self-effacing modesty made him little known in later years to the generality of members in consequence when in 1932, having at last allowed himself to be President, the firmness with which he handled the Committee surprised that sometimes recalcitrant body, “for he spoke with a certain quiet authority that commanded respect.”

Arthur E. Burns, not to be confused with his son “young” Arthur, on the other hand, became active as a rock climber in the early years of the Club and was to have three seasons in the Alps. He indeed was well known to us of my generation -a little grey man, somewhat reminiscent of a Yorkshire terrier, bustling around the room before a lecture started and button-holing members for whispered consultation about Secretarial matters.

Reference to their work as Secretaries will be made later.

### **Some early members**

Philip Minor was one of those two aforementioned solicitors. He was a man of fine stature with a noble head decorated by a trim beard. Although he was only forty when the Club was formed, the beard tended to make the younger members regard him as the father of the Club. Even the young John Wilding (who will be introduced to the readers shortly) found it difficult at first to address him without the “Mister”. Probably none of our more senior members has been so affectionately regarded. “He was a universal favourite” wrote Harry Scott in the obituary notice on his friend in the 1928 Journal. “He was the sun round which all the members revolved; from him radiated light and warmth far more than from any other. . . He was the embodiment of cheerfulness. Free and friendly with everybody . . .” He

*\*His elder brother was the more famous Dr. John Hopkinson, brilliant mathematician and engineer, whose death in 1898 whilst climbing guideless with his two sons and daughter is still one of the unsolved tragedies of the Alps.*

was Treasurer from the first, and was to retain that office until his sudden death in 1927. He established the practice for that officer to introduce each new member at general meeting, and this he always did in such a kindly manner as to make the newcomer feel at home at once.

The other solicitor was his friend C.H.Pickstone. In a more reserved and austere way, his devotion to the Club was the equal of Minor's. Up to his breakdown in 1923 he had attended every Easter Meet and every Dinner - the only man who had done so. Again we must quote Scott: "He was its (the Club's) first Chairman of Committee and did more than any other single man towards setting it on right lines and, by precept and example, keeping it there. Others helped in various ways, but in giving the Club high ideals he was the first". It is a sign of the respect in which he was held that when the time came for the Club to select a President from its own ranks, after the retirement of Hopkinson, Pickstone was the unanimous choice.

Minor appears in several portraits and small groups scattered through the early Journals; but as in each of them his expression has the seriousness of one who realises he is being photographed, none of the pictures presumably does justice to his normally cheerful character.

Of Pickstone on the other hand there is a splendid portrait. I was looking through some of our old Journals many years ago with our veteran Librarian Frank Collins. Suddenly he stopped at a particular picture and excitedly remarked "There



7. *Charles Pickstone.*



8. *Three of 'em.*

he is! Pickstone! That's just like him - always quietly at work for the Club!" The picture is the frontispiece to the 1916 Journal. It shows him carrying two massive loads of timber for use in our Cwm Eigiau hut. With a cigarette hanging loose from his lips, his expression is one of seraphic contentment.

To jump forward a few months for a moment, Scott himself joined in 1903, just too late to be an original member. He was a partner in a firm of yarn agents, a typical stalwart Lancastrian, despite his surname, with a fund of Lancashire stories which he told very well. He had the ideals\* of Pickstone and the humour of Minor. Many of us will remember him. Soon after joining the Club, he formed with Pickstone a friendship which remained his most intimate until Pickstone's death 20 years later. As Pickstone was already a friend of Minor, they formed a trio which was to have a most beneficial influence on the Club. (A good though small picture of the three forms the frontispiece of the 1922 Journal.)

In his article in the 1952 Journal on "The Club's First Fifty Years", John Wilding wrote of the Easter Meets, that "they did so much to foster the spirit of club fellowship and intimacy which extended to all, whatever their social status, who had a genuine love of the hills . . . And this remains the distinguishing mark of the Club today."

At one of our Dinners a few years ago, an officer of a kindred club who was present as a guest (not for the first time) said to one of our members: "I don't know what you fellows have that ours haven't, but these affairs seem much friendlier than ours." And it was whilst responding for the Guests at our 1924 Dinner that Chorley of the Fell & Rock referred to our "extraordinary friendship and comradeship."

A partly detached observer, Geoffrey Winthrop Young, whilst in full agreement with Wilding as to that distinguishing mark, held that it was primarily due to the influence of Pickstone, Minor, and Scott. It was largely because of that friendly spirit which pervaded the Club that it always came next in Young's affectionate regard after his own club, The Climbers'.

To revert to the original committee, we have already met Burns and Entwisle in their capacity of Founders. They also proved to be admirable Secretaries. To quote Wilding again: "Burns bore the brunt of the general secretarial work and immediately became popular by his friendly and helpful attitude and particularly by his welcome to new recruits. Entwisle . . . was indefatigable in his efforts to secure the best lecturers possible for the monthly club nights and also the principal guests for the Dinner. Moreover his weighty counsel and his original outlook were at all times of great value in the deliberations of the Committee."

Two more original members of importance who survived to be known by many of us now living require special mention.

At any Club gathering at which he was present, none so caught the eye as John Rooke Corbett - he of the great height and spade-like beard of well-nigh Assyrian

*\*Those ideals included cleanliness of speech on public occasions in particular at the Dinner. No Club speaker dare crack even a doubtful joke with Pickstone there; and that admirable restraint was generally observed after Pickstone's death whilst Scott was alive.*





**9. John Wilding.**

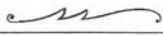
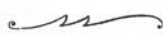


**10. John Rooke Corbett.**

magnificence. By profession he was a civil servant: a Government land valuer for estate duty. Such work hardly seemed worthy of his high intelligence, for at Cambridge he had gained the equivalent of Honours degree in mathematics and he was expert enough at chess to play simultaneous games. His gentle and self-effacing character did not seem to harmonise with his striking appearance. Only a few members appear to have known him well; but those that did so - in particular Scott and Pickstone, and, later, Stephen ("Mac") Forrester - held him in affectionate regard. His speciality in the Club was the long-distance walk, the leading of night-walks, and the collection of "tops". In the last-mentioned capacity we shall meet him again.

John Wilding was a lawyer. Like others who in their youth could not afford to be articled to a solicitor, he was not allowed to sit for exams to qualify for that profession and instead had to be content with that of a managing clerk in a solicitor's office. His professional ability, however, was such that after Minor and Pickstone had gone, he was the lawyer always turned to by the Committee whenever the Club needed legal advice.

As a young man he had suffered the loss of his wife on the birth of his son. Perhaps it was that tragedy which imparted to his demeanour when in repose a cast of seriousness that tended to make those that did not know him think he was aloof by nature. He had a great gift of friendship, however, and those who knew him well, including a group of considerably younger members who took him to their hearts in his later middle years, found him to be a companion whose knowledge of British hill country and whose sense of humour, glorious prejudices, and powers

<p><u>Now, good digestion wait on appetite,</u> <u>And health on both.</u> "Macbeth."</p>	<p><u>. . . . . Of rough quarries,</u> <u>Rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven,</u> <u>It was my hint to speak.</u> "Othello."</p>
<p><b>Menu.</b> </p>	<p><b>Coasts.</b> </p>
<p>Tomato Soup.      Clear Ox Tail.</p> <p>—</p> <p>Turbot and Lobster Sauce.</p> <p>—</p> <p>Roast Beef.      Roast Turkey.</p> <p>Vegetables.</p> <p>—</p> <p>Cabinet Pudding.      Apple Charlotte.</p> <p>Ice Pudding.</p> <p>—</p> <p>Cheese and Celery.</p>	<p>"The King."</p> <p>—</p> <p>"The Manchester Rucksack Club."</p> <p>Proposed by the President.</p> <p>—</p> <p>"The President and Vice-Presidents."</p> <p>Proposed by Mr. C. B. Pickstone.</p> <p>—</p> <p>MUSIC, &amp;c.</p>

### 11. 1902 Dinner Menu.

of Johnsonian repartee made him their first choice whenever a congenial party was being organised.

He was an accomplished all-round mountaineer; but he early turned away from Alpine climbing because he found that in the Alps the unfamiliar food and upset of hours always tended to bring on severe gastric trouble. Instead, he devoted his later holidays to the exploration of the Highlands, his appreciative love for which is displayed by several outstanding articles in the Journal. (See for example RCJs 1913:219; 1917:161; and 1934:346).

#### The Club gets under way

It is remarkable how quickly the Club got into its stride. Though it was formed as late in the year as October, the first of its Annual Dinners took place before the year was out. The system of evening lectures, outdoor meets (including our first cave explorations), and the first Handbook followed rapidly.

There was even sufficient prescience to adumbrate almost at once what was to remain to the present day the most deliciously controversial of all subjects: the admission of women. It was no later than the second General Meeting that someone raised the question; but according to the Minute: "It was thought better to leave the matter over." Undeterred by that resolution. Minor had the temerity, barely six months later, to propose a "social Ladies' Night in July"; but that proposal also failed.



12. *George Ewen.*

### **The Journal**

Even the Journal was under way by 1903 - in the form of an Annual Report prepared by the two Secretaries. Second and Third Annual Reports followed, under the editorship of George Ewen. He was at that time a journalist, and one of the youngest and keenest and most popular of the original members. He was also one of the first to familiarise our members with the Laddow climbs. He began in 1905 a short but brilliant career in the Alps, joining the AC in 1911 at the age of 32.

Ewen did not rest satisfied with producing mere "Reports". Even in 1903 he was pressing for a proper club journal, and eventually bullied the Committee into agreement. The first issue appeared in 1907. It took the general form that was to

last for 70 years: main articles first, then In Memoriam notices, Proceedings of the Club, Excursions, and Reviews, in a cover of the still familiar dark green. Not till 1913, and under another editor, were the reviews signed; and not till 1916 did the "Excursions" become "Climbs and Excursions", so as to include a report by Kelly of his ascent of the Crack on Castle Naze. At the end of the first volume of four issues (1907 to 1910) Ewen had to relinquish the editorship in order to study law in London.

Though the illustrations in that volume are not up to present day standards, there is little fault to find in the articles, many of which, as would be expected from such writers as Pilkington, Oppenheimer (author of "The Heart of Lakeland"), Pickstone, Brierley, Wilding, Corbett, are of high quality. If however I were allowed to choose just one contribution for inexhaustible pleasure it would not be one of the main articles but a two-page note among the "Excursions" pages of the 1908 issue, entitled "A True Account of a Moorland Walk", by F.A.Dust.

The rest of Ewen's tragically brief career may be simply summarised. He progressed so well in his law studies that he passed his exams with distinction and was called to the Bar in 1913. He volunteered - in the Manchesters - soon after the war had begun. As a 2nd Lt. he was awarded the MC at the battle of Neuve Chappelle, was later mentioned in despatches and promoted to captain, and fell during the relief of Kut in 1916.

The next volume of four issues (1911 to 1914) was edited by Ernest Broxap. Except that he was an original member and held a university degree and remained a member till the end of World War II little can be gleaned about him from sources now available. He was certainly an able Editor, for he fully maintained the standard set up by Ewen and expanded the overall length of the volume from Ewen's 296 pages to 375. Here again it would be an invidious task to single out special

contributions for mention. The 1911 issue, however, contained one that was frequently referred to, in particular between the wars. This was Corbett's first list of the Twentyfives of England & Wales, to the collection of which both he and Minor had by then succumbed

To the car-less office worker in those 5½-day weeks between the wars, the pursuit of the Twentyfives afforded some sporting interest. When by means of train, bus, or bicycle, or two or more of them, he had reached some outlying group, he had to make pretty sure of visiting all its 2500ft tops on the possibility that years might elapse before he was in that district again. Hence - as often happened - when the pursuit was impeded by mist, the frantic search for his prey in fear of missing the last train or bus home added the spice of excitement. Nowadays, what with the freer Saturday and greater prevalence of private transport, the pursuit must lack most of its original challenge.

On Broxap's retirement the Journal passed into the hands of Harry Scott. As it remained there well into the inter-war period, a consideration of his editorship will be found in that part of this history.



13. *Reuben Brierley.*

### **The Club is taught to climb**

The first Easter Meet took place in 1903 and was held in Langdale. Some of the members stayed at Stool End Farm. There they encountered as a fellow guest a middle-aged man of somewhat rough appearance and manner. The discovery that they shared the most engrossing of sporting interests brought them together, and he, finding that they had had little experience of rock climbing and indeed of other branches of mountaineering, in which pursuits he was a past master of wide experience, kindly took them in hand. To such an extent did he do this, and so grateful was the Club to him, that in March 1904 he was elected the Club's first Honorary Member.

The new member was Reuben Brierley, schoolmaster, Arts graduate of London University, for ever gratefully remembered as "the man who taught the Club to climb," and whose influence - in Burns' opinion - was to prove as beneficial as that of Pickstone, Minor, and Scott in establishing the Club's early tradition of inner friendliness oblivious of social distinctions.

### **The Club's first hut**

In 1912 we had the distinction of acquiring the first climbing hut in Great Britain. It was derived from a shepherd's cottage lying in the somewhat dismal



**14. Cwm Eigiau Hut.**

lower reaches of Cwm Eigiau, within sight of the distant Craig yr Ysfa. It was not easy of access, and an immense amount of devoted voluntary help was needed to make it habitable. But if it was perhaps an ill-favoured thing it was our own - at least until the lease ran out.

Of the members who helped to equip the hut and run it, all reports select two for special commendation: John Uttley and Stanley Jeffcoat. Considering he was



**15. Stanley Jeffcoat.**

neither in the AC nor had pioneered distant mountain ranges, Uttley got off with us to a flying start. Admitted to the Club in 1903 he was elected to the Committee that same year, appointed to carry out the complex organisation needed to establish the 1904 Easter Meet at Tal y Llyn, entrusted by Ewen to supply two articles to the Second Annual Report, which was published that same year, and considered able enough as a climber accompany Brierley on the Glencoe climbs. He must have acquitted himself well on that occasion in the eyes of the master, for Brierley later included him in a guideless party in the Alps.

His work in the hut was hindered by the fact that he was the tallest man in the Club and the hut's rafters were on the low side. His special skills were with the interior woodwork, making "shelves and doors all neat and well-behaved, just as his fancy dictated, and we desired." His modesty prevented many members from realising that he was probably the most versatile man in the Club.

But the main credit for the acquisition of the hut and its conversion to habitable form was attributed by everyone to Stanley Jeffcoat. To the entire Club he was just "Jeff". He had joined in 1908 at the age of 24. Soon he had acquired an extraordinary record as a climber, culminating in the original exploration of Central Buttress with Herford, Sansom, and Laycock. He was unfortunately unable to be present when the actual first ascent was made. It was also largely due to his enthusiasm that in 1908 the Club for the first time ventured into Scotland for the Easter Meet. That was at Arrochar. Its success justified the even bolder visit to Fort William in 1913. He had a good record in the Alps as well, and was one of Brierley's guideless party who spent the night out on the Aletschhorn (RCJ 1912:121). But as Laycock said: "When one thinks of Jeff one thinks much more of what he was than what he did". Harry Scott (in what Wilding, many years later and after Scott's death, thought was the finest tribute ever paid to a fellow member) wrote that Jeff "embodied in the fullest degree the various qualities which go to make the "perfect Rucksacker" He was the friend of every member of the Club, the very incarnation of the spirit of comradeship" Wilding himself added: "No member through the Club's history accomplished so much in so short a time to enhance its prestige." When the war came he enlisted almost at once and was killed in action in 1917.

A third member who rendered important service to the Hut - sufficiently to result in his being co-opted on to the Hut Sub-Committee in 1919 - and who, like Uttley, was to render still greater service when the Club acquired a more palatial hut some 18 years later, was F.A.Dust, author of "A True Account of a Moorland Walk" referred to above. There is no one now who remembers him as he was in those early years of the Club. To some of us much younger members who first met him between the wars, he usually appeared as a taciturn, somewhat forbidding person, a man who seemingly did not suffer the boisterous young gladly, far less the foolish. "A dry old stick" some of us may have thought him. According to his obituarist, John Drennan (RCJ 1946:185), that aspect of him was only skin deep and in some ways a cover for shyness. Certain it was that once that cover had been broken, a man of good humour and real wit was revealed, whose opinions were idiosyncratic and pungently expressed but who had observed life shrewdly, read widely, and remembered what he had read.

### **The loss of Tony Stoop**

One of Ewen's journalistic sidelines was the contribution to the papers of short descriptions of gritstone climbs. In 1903, soon after he had sent in one of them concerning a climb on Laddow, a Club party found the climb occupied by a young stranger, attempting to identify his position from a tattered newspaper cutting of Ewen's article. He was Anton Stoop, a native of Switzerland, who had worked in



16. Anton "Tony" Stoop.

this country for the past ten years with a shipping firm. Needless to say, he was soon in the Club. His delight at being a member and having so many fellow climbers to talk to was equalled by their pleasure in his company. It was soon found that he was a rock-climber of the first order, and on his way to attain an equal mastery in the Alps.

What was perhaps even more noticeable than his skill on the mountains was his love for them in all their aspects. The extent of that devotion and skill are well demonstrated by a weekend in June 1908 with two members. These two had only just joined the Club; but Stoop was always glad to introduce beginners to the hills, and indeed spent much of his climbing days with new

members of various aptitudes. The plan was no less than the first all-Rucksack attempt on the North-West on Pillar (the first two ascents of which had taken place two years earlier) in the course of an ordinary weekend.

From the description he wrote of it in the 1909 Journal, we learn that they caught the 1.50 p.m. Saturday train to Seascale and by means of their bicycles reached Wasdale Head by 8.00 p.m. Apparently they slept at a farm, for he records that their 4.00 a.m. start next morning called for "considerable persuasive powers to ensure the appearance of a meal before setting out". They roped up at 6.45 a.m., finished the climb by 10.30 a.m., and so had ample margin to cycle back to Seascale to catch the 6.00 p.m. train home.

On the climb itself, all they apparently had to go on was the account written by our member Dr. Taylor (of Taylor's Chimney) of the first ascent and published in the first or 1907 issue of our Journal. Up to Block Ledge the way was scratched and clear enough; but beyond it the description tallied little with the actual

#### THE RUCKSACK CLUB.

October 26th, 1910.

Dear Sir,

We have to inform you that on Friday last the 21st inst., the Committee unanimously decided that on account of the death of Mr. J. A. Stoop, and as a tribute to his memory, the Annual Dinner this year should be cancelled.

The next Meeting of the Club will therefore be held on December 9th.

A. E. BURNS.  
J. H. ENTWISLE.

17. 1910 Dinner Cancellation Notice.

topography. Not till the leader had ascended both Lamb's and Taylor's Chimneys and, in between, descended Lamb's, did they find Oppenheimer's and the way to the top. To have come last down Lamb's Chimney (in nails, of course) with a mere beginner as second down at Block Ledge, might be thought to have required some nerve, but Tony appears to have made light of it.

In 1910 he was climbing guideless in the Alps with Ewen. Their ascent of the Dent Blanche is described by Ewen in the 1911 Journal. A few pages further on is the same writer's obituary notice on his friend; for in October 1910 he was killed on a buttress of the Nantlle Y Garn by the collapse beneath him of a group of large boulders which had just previously allowed the other two members of the party to pass over them. He was the first Rucksacker to die on the hills. So mourned was he, and so close was the accident to the normal date of the Dinner, that the Dinner was cancelled - for the only time in our history.

### **The Committee in trouble**

Another of Herford's climbing companions was John Laycock, a man of strong character and determination. His combative appetites and those of his friend were not satisfied by the Flake Crack. When a village fair was encountered (for example) the two of them had a practice of seeing if it included one of those side-shows in which some old bruiser offered a prize to any visitor who could stand up to him for a round or two. Herford or Laycock would take him on. But where C.B. and the village pugilists had failed, our Committee, after some fierce rounds, succeeded in defeating him.

But it is a sad story, nearly as sad as our utterly crass rejection, on the ground of his youth, of Herford's application to join the Club. What happened with Laycock was this. Soon after he had joined us in 1910, he thought it would be a good idea for the Club to publish in book form a guide to the local gritstone crags - in particular Laddow, Kinder, and Stanage. When he mentioned this to the Committee, it happened to be in one of its more woolly-minded moods, for it gave him to understand that the idea had its support.

When however, in 1911, after much work on his part and on that of Jeffcoat and other assistants, the guide was ready for the printers, the Committee changed its mind. Pickstone in particular, knowing that those crags were in preserved territory to which we were allowed occasional access, took fright at the thought that the publication of such a book over the Club's name might not only be considered as enticement to trespass but would almost certainly cause the irate landowners to refuse us any more permits. So the Committee withdrew its support.

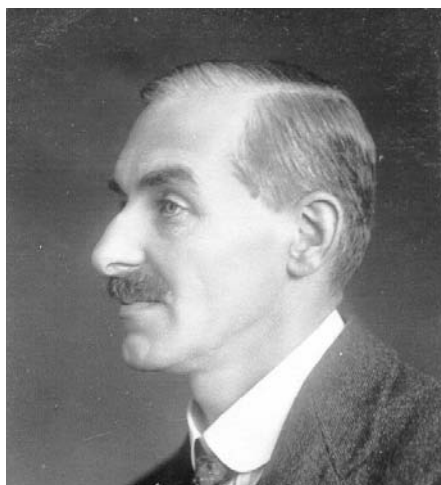
A stormy altercation then ensued between it and the angry Laycock. Convinced that its pusillanimous behaviour was dictated by such of its members - for example, Corbett - who were "mere walkers", he branded them all with the memorable term "Mandarins" (thereafter used as a brickbat to hurl at the Committee by any disgruntled non-committee member) and resigned from the Club. This was a pity, for he was a splendid character as well as a keen and brilliant climber. As Dust said many years later: "would he were with us again to buck up the General Meeting!"



The Committee was also in trouble about Laycock's time with the younger and hence less articulate climbers - for the alleged offence, again attributed to the "mere walkers", of locating the Easter Meets remote from climbable rock. For a diverting account of this contest see Dust's article "The Caucus" (RCJ 1929:361) from which the above quotation was taken.

### **Some further members**

In 1909 there occurred an event which might well be considered the most important in the Club's history after its foundation. This was the accession to its ranks of Eustace



**18. Eustace Thomas.**

Thomas, who for mountaineering achievement combined with devotion to the Club was to become its most eminent member. By profession he was an engineer - a director and chief engineer of a small but prosperous firm engaged in the manufacture of electrical control gear, the prosperity being mainly due to his technical ability and the business acumen of his brother Bertram.

Something of his mountaineering achievements will emerge from the later pages of this history. Exceptional though they were, he so seldom introduced them into a conversation and answered so modestly when questioned about them that when one was in his presence one tended to forget about them, and admire instead the grasp of his wide-ranging scientist's mind of whatever subject he was particularly interested in at the moment - whether it be the minutiae of watch-making, or the approaching danger of world starvation, or a difficult problem in engineering design.

In his prime, he was perhaps less interested in the hills themselves than in their use as a ground for trying out that wonderful machine, his body, which he tuned and strengthened to a perfection of output with the devoted skill of an engineer, rather than that of a conventional long-distance athlete. In his later years, his underlying affection for the hills - even the gentler hills, rather than the Alps - and the home moors, remained with him, and on an evening stroll over Kinder he would sometimes talk of all that they had brought him of happy days and friendships.

Basically his two main loves were engineering and the Club which contained his dearest friends. These loves were amusingly exemplified when, on some occasion when his mechanical assistance was needed, he replied that there were two things his pockets were never short of - a screwdriver and the Club handbook.

For the next nine years he seems to have played little part in the Club's outdoor activities except to attend the informal Easter Meet in 1916. As yet no one - still less himself - was aware of the physical power that slumbered within him. During those nine years he "didst walk on earth unguess'd at".

Eustace Thomas's friend, William Walker, who joined in 1913, was originally a business man holding directorships in engineering companies. In early middle life, whilst retaining those activities, he became interested in municipal work. In those days Manchester was one of the cities that made its own electricity, and from 1909 Walker sat on the committee appointed by the City Council to see that enough electricity was available. In this he was no doubt assisted by his friend, the City's Chief Electrical Engineer, Dr.S.L.Pearce, who had joined the Club in 1908 on Pickstone's sponsorship. From 1920 onwards Walker was to dominate the committee that developed the city's water supply. It was largely due to him that the Haweswater scheme came into being, and he himself was to lay the foundation stone of the Haweswater dam in 1935. Already - in 1932 - he had been Lord Mayor; and in 1945 was to be knighted for his outstanding public services.



**19. William Walker.**

His preference with the Club appears to have been the long-distance moorland walks. As a centre for them he for years organised the popular New Year meets at Yorkshire Bridge. One of his exploits from there with Eustace Thomas will be mentioned in Part 2 of our history. Though Walker could be brusque at times with Club members who deplored the Haweswater scheme and the closing of the Nag's Head to prevent risk of pollution of Thirlmere, we learn from Donald Berwick (who as a close friend of Heardman's can be considered a connoisseur of hill comradeship) that Walker was a grand companion to be out with on the hills. According to Eustace Thomas, it was Walker who first introduced him to fell-walking when Eustace was 45 (that would be about 1914/15); but the seed did not germinate until Begg took Eustace in hand in 1918, as described in Part 2.

Two other members who had also joined in 1913 and remained especially dear friends of Eustace Thomas deserve special mention. They were Bill Humphry and Harry Summersgill, both exceptionally memorable characters in their own right.

Imagine, when he was stripped, the smooth torso of a youthful Hercules crowned by the countenance of a benign Mr. Pickwick and you will see W.M. Humphry, Secretary of the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital and "Bill" to absolutely everybody. As with Walker, his dominant Rucksack interest and pleasure in this country when he was in his prime lay in the long-distance walks and in the companionship of his many friends in the Club. He was not built for speed, but his staying power in the Club's experience was quite literally inexhaustible. Never, under any circumstances, was he ever known to be tired, or less than cheerful, or to be dismayed by bad weather or other discomforts.

In the Alps, where he remained active after age had lessened his appetite for long walks, it was said of him that "Bill was always ready to do what anyone else wanted to do, and was always enjoying whatever he was doing. He was the perfect companion for a holiday". His strength freed the party from much anxiety about

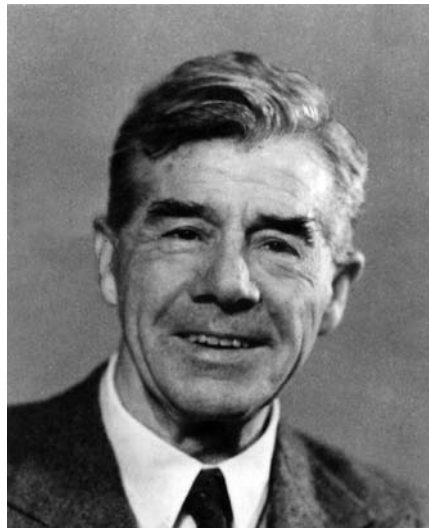
crevasses; though it must be admitted that it was replaced by anxiety lest in the irresistible enthusiasm with which he would rescue a companion who had gone through, he would fail to extricate him in one piece. In the hard-up days between the wars, the younger members of the party were seldom able to afford the richer Swiss comestibles; but Bill, being a man of means, would usually manage to make up for such deprivation on an off day by treating the whole party to a tea of a sumptuousness that only Hanselmann's could supply. Yes, surely a perfect companion!

Though Harry Summersgill was not much below middle height, his rugged features, stocky but light build, and grizzled hair, and the rough misshapen tweeds of his workday and leisure dress, imparted a gnome-like appearance. His countenance usually suggested an innate pessimism. The men on the shop floor of the plant where he was a works' manager - he was a trained mechanical engineer and a good manager - held that he made his clothes himself. Those of a more thoughtful disposition added that the pattern for them was made by his lying on a large sheet of brown paper whilst his wife drew round him with a piece of chalk. Belying his appearance was his voice, which was ever "soft, gentle, and low." It would remain so even in dispute.

He was slow to make friends; but with those of his selection his features would lighten to a sweetness appropriate to the gentle tones of his voice and his talk would have "a puckish mixture of seriousness and gently ironic humour that was all his own." Hill and moorland walking held his main interest. In his early days he was a companion of the famous Dawson; later, of Eustace Thomas, in particular as organiser of the support for his attempts on the fell record; and then of Heardman and others of the home moorland team. His company on the hills or on the journey to them, as by the fire-side, was always a delight, for his talk would be enlivened by the unexpected, and lighted by a wayward humour.



20. Bill Humphry.



21. Harry Summersgill.

After they were past their strenuous days on the hills, these three friends would usually contrive to share a summer week or two at some hill hostelry such as Forrester's Tunstead. There in the front parlour after their gentle conversational excursion on Kinder - so a close friend of all three but of a younger generation remembers: "Harry and Eustace would engage in long erudite discussions of engineering problems, athletic training, watch-making lore, motor cars, flying, topical economic problems, and suchlike technical matters, Eustace worrying the subject detail by detail, Harry participating similarly sometimes mildly philosophising or throwing in an unexpected contrary, whilst the debate would be interlarded with Bill's genially cynical reflections on engineers in general and the world at large."

Another member who joined in 1913 and who did not reach office but whose good nature and devotion to the hills made his friendship particularly prized for many years afterwards was Tom Arnfield. He had hardly joined the Club when the war broke out. He immediately enlisted, as did other members, in the Manchester Regiment. In the course of the war he was awarded the Military Medal for taking tea to the front-line trenches under heavy fire. "Anyone who has walked with Tom", records his friend of a younger generation, Frank Kiernan, "and observed his fondness for a cup of tea, coupled with his brave and kindly character will not be surprised at this personal act of heroism" (RCJ 1957:143). Shreds of army language remained with him for years after that war, so that at times of stress on the hills his young friends would be amused to hear from such normally gentle and taciturn lips the rich four-letter words of the trenches. Most of his longest hill-walks were carried out before the war but he was still fit enough after it to assist Eustace Thomas with his fell-record attempts and turn out regularly on the harder moorland meets.

Frank Collins, on the other hand, who joined in 1910, did achieve an important office. From being Assistant Librarian in 1915 he became promoted to the office itself in 1920 and thereafter exercised it with loving care and efficiency as shown by his Reports to the AGMs for 50 years - the longest tenure of office in the Club's history.



22. *Frank Collins.*

He was a quiet, gentle character, never known to be argumentative or in the slightest degree out of humour. His preference was for long solo days in the Highlands, the trees of whose forests, in particular, he loved in a discerning manner. He was not one for writing up his exploits in the hills, though some of his solo days in the remoter Highlands must have been worthy of record. He lived long enough for his obituary notice, written by his friend Ted Moss, to have appeared in one of our Journals of recent date - the combined 1970/71 issue, page 220 - and those who have read it will have a much better picture of Frank Collins than the one attempted here.

In the same year as Collins, we recruited W.E.Richards, a taciturn giant of a man, the only man in the Club who we irreverent youngsters considered would be a match for Bill Humphry or Eustace Thomas in a free-for-all fight. He was as strong a walker as they were, too, and indeed a good mountaineer, as was shown by his ascent alone with Wilding of the NE buttress of Ben Nevis under winter conditions severe enough to render combined tactics at the Mantrap essential. As Outdoor Organiser from 1916 to 1926, he was not afraid to experiment with novelties, such as a series of climbs or walks for afternoons, but the best attendances were usually at the standard meets such as Easter and the joint meets. Two remarkable features - each in 1923 - were joint meets at Laddow with the Pinnacle Club, with attendances of 39 and 50. Many years were to elapse before we again had the pleasure of a joint meet with a ladies' club.

We acquired in each of the years 1909 and 1914 a member who was not only of the highest class, but also the holder of an important office between the wars and so appears in Part 2 of our history. The one who joined in 1909 (the same year as Eustace Thomas), was Morley Wood, who was to succeed Entwisle as joint Secretary with Burns and share with his great friend Fred Pigott the first route on



23. *Morley Wood.*

the East Buttress of Clogwyn Du'rarddu. The genial manner in which he was to carry out his secretarial duties, in particular when welcoming new members, together with his reputation as a climber whose cheerful confidence and imperturbability only increased as conditions grew worse, made him one of the most affectionately regarded of Club members.

The other was H.M. Kelly, pioneer of the Lakeland climbs in succession to Herford, and deviser for the Fell and Rock's first edition of their Pillar guide, a style of pitch by pitch description which they enthusiastically adopted for all the guides in the second edition (making

Kelly editor-in-chief). In later years he was to be one of the most active and popular of our Presidents. In his middle years he tended to a somewhat brusque peremptoriness of manner that estranged some members; so it came as a surprise to them to discover during his Presidency his natural kindliness, and how good and considerate a Chairman he made.

### **The War**

Some 42 members joined the forces in the course of the war. Of the 7 who did not survive it, the most secure in memory after Ewen and Jeffcoat was Lehmann Oppenheimer - he who included in his qualifying list for Club membership no less than 65 ascents of Pillar, who was Botterill's second on the first ascent of the North West, and to whose devotion to the Rock, Kelly pays tribute in his Pillar guides. A full Roll of Honour is included at the end of the 1919 Journal.



*24. Lehmann Oppenheimer.*

# The Club at Home: 1919-1939

*by Philip Brockbank*

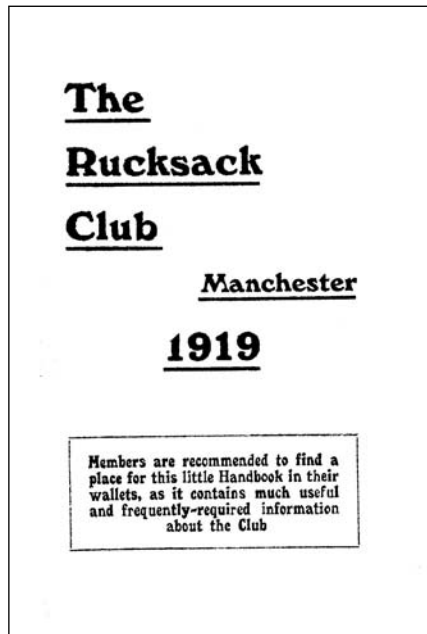
The AGM of January 1919 confirmed Philip Minor in the joint offices of President and Treasurer, and the two founders - Burns and Entwisle - as the joint Secretaries, whilst Scott was again entrusted with the Journal. The Past Presidents Dixon, Hopkinson, and Pickstone remained Vice-Presidents (Pilkington having died the previous year), together with Scott and a hoped-for future President, Hermann Woolley.

The Committee again included such auguries for a brilliant future as Kelly, Wilding, and Eustace Thomas. Its most striking action during the year was to lower the age limit from 21 to 19 years - without seeking the approval of a General Meeting. Perhaps in this it was trying to make amends for the Club's pre-war action of refusing to admit on the score of youth the greatest British rock-climber of the pre-war era - S.W.Herford - as already mentioned.

In the Handbook of those days the age and other qualifications required of an applicant did not appear among the main Rules, not even as a footnote, but were set forth near the end of the Handbook in a copy of the Application Form. Following it were some notes about the Club Hut (still in Cwm Eigiau) in place of our present Rule 7. They included directions as to its location and particulars of the equipment that should be found there.

The first Journal (1919) of Scott's second volume includes an obituary notice on Charles Pilkington. As we have seen, he was our third President (1906/08). In addition to his exploration of the Black Coolin, his skill in other sports - riding, shooting, fishing and deer stalking - makes one wonder how he ever found the time from his industrial career for the extensive Alpine explorations that eventually brought him to the Alpine Club Presidency. The notice - a model for charm and succinctness - was written by his successor as our President, Sir Alfred Hopkinson.

The Committee's Report presented to the 1920 AGM records the membership as 153, and the average attendance at the eleven Committee meetings as 12 out of a possible 14. The average at the ordinary meetings was 37. It included a request that where a lecture was to be given by a non-member, our members should do their



*25. 1919 Handbook Cover.*

best to turn up - and to stay to the end - out of courtesy to the lecturer, who might have been put to expense due to the "enormous cost" of railway travelling. Nowadays such cost is still enormous, but I understand it is usually met by the Club.

An Extraordinary Business Meeting was called in June 1920 to consider two proposals. The first of them, proposed by Wilding and seconded by Meldrum, was to introduce the present rule that ordinary, as distinct from ex officio, members of the Committee must retire after three consecutive years in that capacity but could seek re-election after a year's interval. Primarily this was to remove a grievance of the younger members, who tended to complain that the old Committee was merely re-elected en bloc. The rule is such a salutary one and has worked so well in practice that it is hard to see what the minority opposition - powerfully led by Burns - had against it.



26. *Harry Doughty.*

"At one point during the discussion (Wilding was later to record, RCJ 1952:13) a new member - a stranger to many of us - made a short but telling comment on the opposition's case. "Who is that chap?" seemed to be the unspoken reaction of most of those present. It was J.H.Doughty's introduction to the Club."

Harry Doughty (who joined us in 1920 at the age of 31) was a schoolmaster, eventually the senior mathematics master at Leigh Grammar School. He might have risen higher in his profession had his father not been killed in an accident at a critical moment in the son's career. For he had done so well at Manchester Grammar School that its renowned High Master, J.L.Paton, had strong hopes of his winning a scholarship to Oxford or Cambridge. But the death of his father made it necessary for the son to find a university where he could live with his mother at home. So he

sat for a scholarship at Manchester University, was successful, and a few years later graduated in mathematics with first-class honours.

The Club has included among its members men whose high intellectual distinction in one profession or another had received public recognition; but amongst members closely participating in the life of the Club between the wars, Doughty reigned intellectually supreme. He was perhaps best known to most of the Club for his contributions to discussions at meetings, at which he seldom rose without contributing matter both of wit and substance. His aptitude for committee work was well described in a kindred club journal: "If no urgent matter is on the agenda (or



even if one is) he is prepared to revive the question which was voted upon and settled last month, or last year, to shed fresh light upon it, to view it through differently coloured spectacles and generally speaking to relieve the monotony of the proceedings. Fastening unerringly upon each debating point, he develops his argument with remorseless logic and devastating lucidity - at the same time gazing benevolently at the Chair through his spectacles until that unfortunate individual is reduced to the condition of the rabbit in front of the boa constrictor.” \*

Robin Gray, who served on the Committee with Doughty, in particular when Doughty was President, does not wholly agree with our contemporary's suggestion that Doughty was inclined to drag up extraneous matter or resolved issues. His recollection is that Doughty applied himself very effectively to the business in hand, and possessed a particular ability to see and bring out the essentials of each matter under discussion.

Above all, Doughty was known for his after-dinner speeches. His talent in that respect made him the most sought-after guest among the kindred clubs. (“Please send someone to our Dinner - Doughty if possible.”) Unlike many popular speakers at such festivities, he made slight use of the funny story. His usual style was a genial disquisition, with a Churchillian width and aptness of vocabulary, on some of the foibles or other characteristics of the member he was toasting, or other eminent person present. He would hold his audience in silent suspense whilst he paused to search his mind for the precise (and usually quite unexpected) word that he wanted. None of his speeches have been recorded; but something of his character may be discovered from his writings, a particularly important one of which will shortly be referred to. His conversation enriched many an evening's talk on a Club away meet, not least by the smoke-room fire at our hut at Tal y Braich.

Of his skill as a rock-climber, usually in company with his great friend H.M.Kelly, some mention is made by Byrom in a later part of this history.

The other proposal at that special meeting was to raise the entrance fee from 7/6 to 10/-, and (introducing a differential between town and country members) a subscription of £1 (previously 10/6) to all members whose permanent residence or place of business was within 20 miles of the Manchester Royal Exchange, but leaving the previous subscription at 10/6 to members outside that range. Both motions were passed.

In May a circular, addressed to all kindred clubs, was received from Geoffrey Winthrop Young suggesting their affiliation, and inviting us to send a member to a conference to be held in London. The reason for such a proposal and the suggested details for the affiliation are not now apparent. It appears to have caused the Committee some embarrassment, for they did not see what good it would do us (or indeed any of the kindred clubs), yet - presumably - did not wish to hurt the feelings of its very eminent sponsor. After deferring the matter from May to July, and then to September, they decided not to join. They adhered to this decision despite a letter received from the Climbers' Club next month regretting it. There the matter was to rest till next year.

*\*H.E.S. in the 1931 F & R Journal*

The death of our first honorary member Reuben Brierley, of whom mention has been made in the first part of this history, was the subject of an obituary notice by Pickstone in the 1920 Journal. He considered that to Brierley the Club owed much of its early success, through his patient teaching of our inexperienced members how to climb, whether on rock or in the Alps. This view was to be endorsed three years later by Burns in reviewing the Club's first 21 years: "He (Brierley) contributed more than anybody else to our becoming established as a body of climbers of the first rank." And in the Jubilee (1952) issue of the Journal Wilding was to declare that Brierley had become almost a legendary character of our first decade and that his skill and knowledge had been of inestimable value to the young Club.

In a lighter mood, the 1920 Journal includes a short humorous poem - a fragrant masterpiece in miniature - entitled "Citronella". It was unsigned; but no doubt was soon discovered to be the work of John Hirst who had joined the previous year. Most of Hirst's subsequent compositions took the form of parodies of well-known songs adapted to poke fun at some club celebrity and intended to be sung - by Hirst himself, usually at some appropriate function, such as a dinner of ours or other clubs. His parodies are so good as sometimes to seem superior to their models. Doughty thought him the best parodist since C.S. Calverley - the leading parodist of the Victorian era. In writing verses to be sung, it may often be tempting to scamp the workmanship knowing that defects would very likely be hidden by the music. But the bulk of Hirst's work was so skilfully written as to be keenly enjoyed when read without the music in mind. An example will be given later.

At the October Committee, Kelly, Wilding and Richards were appointed to attend a conference initiated by the Art Museum Field Club to press for cheaper rail fares. Presumably they were still "enormous". Another matter of importance raised at that meeting was a decision to search for new rooms because of the increase in the fees charged by our centre at that time, the Albion Hotel. A sub-committee was appointed for that purpose.

The most important event in 1921 was the ending of our tenancy of the Hut in Cwm Eigiau. As far back as October 1919 the Committee had listened to a report of the unsatisfactory conditions there both as regards our privacy and the safety of its contents - caused, apparently, by the depredations of the navvies engaged on some public works scheme connected with Llyn Cowlyd. A suggestion had been made the ensuing year to our landlord that the Hut should be closed until the public works in the vicinity had been completed, we to pay a nominal rent during that period. This had come to nothing on our learning that the works were not due to be finished for another three years. Hence letters were despatched in February 1921 to end our tenancy.

Important changes occurred among the officers. Scott, having intimated his intention to resign after completing the 1922 Journal, was straightway raised to the Presidency, in place of Pickstone, who had refused to stand for another year. Scott's recommendation that Wilding should succeed him as Editor was cordially accepted by the Committee. A few months earlier, Entwisle had declared his wish to resign as Co-Secretary for business reasons. This was accepted with much regret,

especially in view of his being one of the two Co-Founders. Arrangements were at once put in hand to collect for a presentation.

If the Committee thought it was rid of the awkward matter of Affiliation last year, it was soon disillusioned. At its March meeting the new President (Scott) reported the regrets of the other kindred clubs (presumably conveyed to him by his friend G.A.Solly) at our refusal even to join in the discussion of Young's scheme, and warned the Committee that a draft constitution would shortly be coming for its comments.

The draft arrived in November and on the strength of it and Solly's plea for reconsideration the Committee at its December meeting appointed two delegates (ultimately Carr and Minor) to attend the next Affiliation conference in London. They were instructed to inform the conference that we supported the scheme on the lines laid down in the draft "provided that our individual freedom of action is fully safeguarded and with a recommendation that in matters affecting British interests the meetings should be held somewhere in the North and not all in London." What apparently we wanted "fully safeguarded" were the somewhat fragile privileges which we then possessed of climbing on Laddow and the Roaches and (once or twice a year) visiting Kinder, with the consent of the respective proprietors; though how our affiliation would be likely to lose us those privileges is not clear.

The 1921 Journal had to lament, in a notice by Minor, the loss of Hermann Woolley, who had died exactly a fortnight after having lectured to the Club on the Lofoten Islands. As already recorded, he with Dixon, Pilkington, and Collier, were the first eminent supporters of the Club; but, unlike them, could not be persuaded to become our President.

The year 1922 began with an event which was to prove of great in widening the Club's mountaineering experience: the election to membership on 11th January of J.F.Burton. \*

John Firth Burton ("Firth" to his many friends) was to have the distinction of introducing more members to the Alps than anyone else in our history to date. The Alps were his passion, and his annual three weeks holiday among them the loadstone of his outdoor existence. How he had first met them - in the particular form of Mont Blanc - and something of the excitement the sight of them aroused in him can be found in his article "The White Mountain" in the 1935 Journal.

He regarded a three-week minimum as essential; the first week was to be spent getting fit by means of a walking tour, preferably including some high passes and perhaps one or two of the lower tops, taken guideless, and the remaining two with a guide in pursuit of the biggest game. He was so determined to have his three weeks that even at the start of his professional life in the cotton industry he made a three-weeks holiday a condition of joining - and that at a time when jobs were scarce and few employees below Board level were allowed more than the usual two weeks.

*\*Later Handbooks show his date of joining as 1921. But they would appear to be in error; for according to the Minutes, the Committee meeting that passed his application took place on 11th January 1922.*

As a walker he was prodigiously strong. If he was not in the first rank for speed, he conveyed the impression of speed by resting so little on the march. Thus he would take a 5000 foot slog up to a hut without a break, though contriving to carry more than his share of the load. And when at last the remainder of his party had arrived at the hut, in dire need of rest despite having taken several on the way, it would be to learn that their leader had arrived an hour earlier, had dumped his kit, and was away up the glacier taking photographs. And those training walks, when he was in his prime, would tax to the uttermost the

28. "A Surprise Item".



27. *Firth Burton.*

strongest of his recruits, the beginners perhaps ruefully remembering how little they had expected such a castigation at the hands of the friendly, gently-spoken, bespectacled member who had invited them to join the party.

In between his Alpine holidays Burton took a

very active part in the Club's outdoor programme; but whatever the meet - climbing or walking - he primarily regarded the exercise as practice training for his next Alpine holiday. Once after a particularly able lead up a difficult climb early in the year, he was heard to remark to his second "we should be all right for the Marmolada", the Dolomites being on the programme for his next holiday.

The year 1922 also saw the birth or settling down of several new club formations. Taking the ladies first, the inception of the Pinnacle Club had already taken place at Pen-y-Gwryd in March of the previous year. In response to a telegram from them to our 1921 Easter Meet at Boot, our President had been instructed by the Committee to send their President, Mrs Winthrop Young, our congratulations. Its inception might not, however, have become generally known to the Club until the publication of our 1922 Journal, which included (curiously sandwiched between "Further New Ascents in Wasdale" and the "Proceedings" section) a letter from Mrs Young and Mrs Kelly explaining the reasons why their new club had been founded.

The chief of them were to bring into association with one another girls without male relations in the climbing world but who wanted to take part in the sport; and those who preferred to climb only with members of their own sex. A still more important aim was to allow women to experience and master the finer points of leadership - both in its narrow and wider senses - which in a mixed party tended

rather naturally to devolve on the men. They reported that the club already had a membership of 60. Hardly had that number of the Journal appeared when the Club was shocked to learn of the death of Mrs Kelly in a fall from the Heather Terrace on Tryfan.

Another inauguration was our London Dinner, the first of which took place on 31st March at Gatti's, its venue for many future years. The function was attended by our own President and was distinguished by the presence as chief guest of Haskett-Smith.

Earlier in that month, Wallace May, one of our Birmingham members, had written to other members in that area to propose they should meet to discuss the possibility of regular meetings of midland mountaineers. His idea at first had been to form a Birmingham section of our Club, corresponding to our London section. But it was later thought better to form an independent club. They decided to call it the Midland Association of Mountaineers.

Still on the subject of new formations, we read of Minor and Carr reporting to the pre-AGM Committee meeting on the Council meeting in London concerning the Affiliation scheme which they had attended on our behalf. They told the Committee that the Council "was not likely to do much good and could not do much harm." Encouraged by this somewhat lukewarm opinion - no doubt mainly by its second half - the Committee decided that we should affiliate.

But they were still not quite rid of that embarrassing topic; for in March came a request from H.P.Cain - the Hon. Secretary of what was by then grandiosely termed the "Advisory Council of British Mountaineering Clubs" - for our subscription. With a name like that a sub of many guineas might have been expected. But all that was asked was 10/- plus another 10/- for clubs having over 100 members. As the Committee put its hand in the Club's pocket it asked the President to make clear to Cain - as one might have guessed! - "our own position as to access to Kinder in case they (the Council) should think of taking action at any time without knowing the special arrangements we had."

This anxiety about access to Kinder reads curiously today. For though admittedly there was assured access to hardly any of the best gritstone crags and few climbers could afford to make many visits to the Lakes or Wales, yet all we wanted as regards Kinder was just one day, or sometimes two, a year, and that day was the day of the Dinner Meet when the necessity for maintaining polite social observances towards the guests prevented much serious climbing from being done. Needless to say, the Club's hardier members, like those of other local clubs, paid little attention to the restrictions which moorland owners attempted to impose, and roamed over Kinder and Bleaklow whenever the keepers could be evaded.

Among news concerning individual members, Morley Wood was appointed to succeed Entwisle as Co-Secretary and it was unanimously decided to invite our first President, Professor Dixon, to resume that post for the Club's coming-of-age year 1923.

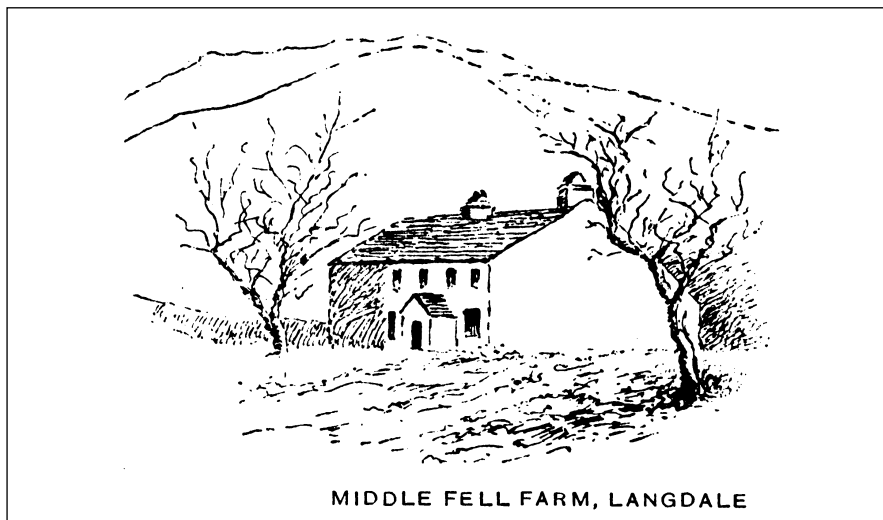
The 1922 number ends Scott's second and last volume of the Journal. In it he maintained the resolution he had made at the start of his Editorship of making each Journal a Club Journal, not only by its emphasis on Club events but also by

allowing the main articles to depend plentifully on Club personalities and even at times be wholly concerned with them, as in the case of his own cartoons or Hirst's parodies. It is always a matter of controversy whether the Journal of a Club such as ours should be of that kind; or by minimising Club news and keeping the main articles to subjects of general interest to broaden the appeal of the Journal to nonmembers. Or, of course, to compromise between the two. As we shall see, his immediate successor, Wilding, tended towards the broader style; whereas his successor, Doughty, reverted to Scott's policy to an even greater extent, with results that did not meet with full approval.

The war did not restrict his first four issues (1915/18) to the extent that the later war restricted those after 1939. The last two of his first volume are sadly dominated by obituaries on members who had fallen in action.

Another of Scott's innovations about which there could be no controversy was his use from his first number of line blocks to decorate the spaces left where articles finished part-way down the page. In one respect - the index at the end of each volume - Scott fell far short of Ewen's and Broxap's practice; for whereas they indexed so thoroughly as to require eight or nine pages of index per volume, Scott and - even more surprisingly - Wilding and Doughty, only required two. To the generality of readers, no doubt, the volume index is a matter of small importance, perhaps never used at all. But to anyone who has had to refer at all frequently to back numbers the inadequacies of the five volume indexes between the retirement of Broxap and the accession in 1935 of Robin Gray are often a cause of regret.

Scott's retirement was the subject of the best of Hirst's Gilbertian parodies, based on Bunthorne's song in "Patience", and compulsorily published in his last number. The verse which refers to the Editor's alleged brutal treatment of his contributors (such an unlikely characteristic of so kindly a man) irresistibly demands quotation:



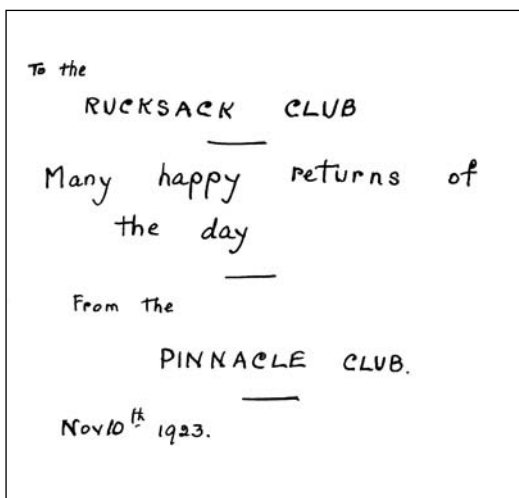
29. The first of Scott's 'Tailpiece' line blocks.

Then you ruthlessly refuse any copy that you choose  
from the young aspirants' quills.  
And you censor all particular accounts of perpendicular  
ascents of well-known hills.  
If there's any sign of mutiny the copy goes for scrutiny  
to Corbett, whom you square.  
His verdict's never doubted and the manuscript is flouted  
and the author tears his hair.

Was that hint at Corbett's anti-rock-climbing influence an echo of the controversy with Laycock described in Part 1 of this history?

As early as 1921, Hirst's poetic talent had become so widely known throughout the kindred clubs as to result in his being asked by our own Club to prepare for publication an extensive collection of the songs then in vogue at kindred club festivities; they mostly took the form of known tunes but with words composed to suit the occasion. The success of this venture, which we published in 1922 as "Songs of the Mountaineers", was assured when Geoffrey Young made Hirst free use of Young's "Pen y Pass Songs."

The Coming-of-Age year 1923 was celebrated by the return of Professor Dixon to the Presidential chair and by an Annual Dinner at which there was not only a record attendance - up to then - of 94 members and 23 guests but also by three principal guests of a joint eminence never before or (so far) afterwards attained at our Dinners: Geoffrey Winthrop Young, Dr Wakefield (recently returned from Everest), and C.E.Montague. Among the guests who represented kindred clubs were Norman Collie (AC), Steeple (SMC), Bower (Fell & Rock), and Wallbank (MAM). The speeches were prefaced by the informal presentation to the President by Wallbank on behalf of the MAM of a chairman's hammer of ivory, silver mounted and suitably engraved - an action as charmingly appropriate as it was unorthodox.



30. A 21st. Birthday Card.

The year saw the publication of Wilding's first Journal. Appropriately the first article was concerned with the Club's Coming-of-Age - a long and masterly account by Burns of the Club's first 21 years. A further reference to that number of the Journal will be given later when considering Wilding's editorial work as a whole.

In addition to the Dinner, the Club enjoyed three evenings of interest. In February, Dr Wakefield spoke of his experiences with the 1922

Everest Expedition, illustrated by many of his own slides. He himself had been chosen for, and had started with, the party that eventually made the highest ascent; but on meeting Mallory's party descending he had self-sacrificingly turned back to deal with their frostbite.

In March the Club heard Geoffrey Young read a paper entitled "Mountaineering and its Prophets". His main thesis was that mountaineering was the ideal quest, not mountains, which served only as "a magnetic attraction so that the true object of the mountaineering impulse is probably a hunt after the psychological affinity distributed between them and us." He went on to discuss whether the Victorian discoverers of the Alps felt and expressed that impulse; he contended that they did feel it but only Leslie Stephen had come near to confessing it.

Among the audience were Professor Dixon (in his celebration year as President) and his guest Professor Herford, father of the great Siegfried, conqueror of Central Buttress, who had died in the war.

Despite the difficulty of the subject, the paper resulted in a lively discussion in which both professors took part, as well as Doughty and other intellectuals of the home side. It elicited one of the finest compliments ever paid to the Club in the shape of a letter from Young to Scott in which he said: "The welcome which you and the Club gave to the Paper was one of the pleasantest surprises that have happened to me of late years. I genuinely thought they would all be bored! The response, poetic and argumentative, was astonishing in such a spontaneous debate. The Club has very good wits, as well as a very kindly and hospitable heart . . . The Club's treatment of myself was too charming even to be acknowledged."

And then in October Dr Inglis Clark displayed some of his unique collection of colour slides, mostly of Scottish scenery, before an audience of 250 members and friends - surely the largest attendance at any of our evening meetings?

The principal subject of discussion during the year was the election of officers, in particular the Vice-Presidents. At the April Committee meeting it was agreed (a) that there was no reason to limit the number of Vice-Presidents and (b) that it was not necessary to select the President from among them. The September Committee meeting went deeper into the matter and produced for circulation to all members a report on the subject of the President and the VPs, with a recommendation that in future the number of VPs should not be maintained at six as a custom and that the office should be conferred only on those the Club desired strongly to honour; or on those whom it desired to retain on the Committee in an honorary position for the benefit of their experience and advice. Members were further reminded that every Office, without exception, became vacant at the end of each year and each position was filled by the deliberate will and act of those present at the Annual General Meeting.

At the AGM of 1924 Dixon retired from the Presidency, which he had only agreed to accept for the one year. His place was taken by Eustace Thomas. It was then that Eustace began to hold each month during his term of office and thereafter once a year, after each Dinner, and except during the war, those At Homes in which he and his sister Mary (until her death in 1932) entertained the élite of the Club (meaning the Committee of the day and his own special Rucksack friends) and



their wives to an informal evening of lantern slides, songs, and general conversation. For many of his guests those later annual parties were to prove the supreme social event of the year, surpassing even the Dinner itself.

Two other notable happenings took place at that AGM. One was the presentation to Burns of an illuminated address, prepared by Will Mellor, in consideration of the splendid services he had rendered the Club since its foundation. The other was a resolution, arrived at after a long discussion, that the Committee be requested to consider the question of our affiliation with the Ramblers' Federation, and report to the Club. The subject came up for consideration at the March Committee meeting, where it was unanimously decided that the Federation should be informed that we were not prepared to join it but would always be prepared to act with it to support any mutually desired object.

In proposing the Club's health, George Sang of the SMC took us gently to task for including in "the last number" (1924?) of our Journal three articles dealing with Scotland. He wished, however, that the authors of those articles had been a little more particular in reading the SMC's Journal for then they would not have imagined they were touching virgin ground. The identification of the articles concerned is left as a puzzle for our present readers. To make amends for that little criticism, Sang ended by describing us as the "vital" mountaineering club of England.

Early in 1925 occurred a moorland fatality which, though it did not directly concern the Club, was to have an effect on some of its actions, as prescribed by the 1926 and all subsequent Handbooks down to the present day. This was the death of James Evans in the course of the Manchester Rambling Club's Marsden-Edale of Sunday the 4th January.

The weather conditions do not appear to have been unfavourable for the time of year. No mention was made in the subsequent statements of snow underfoot or of especial cold. Evans was among the last four of the party of seven as far as Featherbed Moss. The other three had gone on ahead on the usual route for Edale - that is, to cross the Ashop at about its mid point, where there was a small cabin, and up the far side towards Ashop Edge. When Evans's companions had reached the cabin and stopped there for some food, they discovered he was no longer with them - this caused them no concern, for they were accustomed to members taking their own line. As they ascended the further slope, Evans came into sight, still on Featherbed Moss; they noticed that he had taken a more westerly course, as if aiming for Hayfield or for a higher crossing of the Ashop. Light was now fading in the dusk of a midwinter evening (at about 4.10 p.m.) Their last sight of him was on the far skyline, still heading westwards. It was not until next morning that they found he had not returned home.

As he was eventually discovered to have died a few hundred feet down the Fairbrook, it may well be imagined that the first searches, all in the opposite direction (that is, towards William or Hollingworth Cloughs or the uppermost Ashop) were unsuccessful. Day after day that week, in increasing numbers, the search went on; and day after day the Manchester Guardian reported it, beginning with almost a full column on Wednesday, 7th January, and following the search

daily for the rest of the week. Public interest was thus progressively aroused and - as can also be well imagined - the majority view was of strong condemnation of Evans's companions for having "continued without him."

The one of our members who, by reason of his civic eminence as an Alderman and very wide professional acquaintance, bore the brunt of such verbal comments, was William Walker. At length he grew tired of repeating his defence of Evans's companions and, instead, embodied it in a long letter to the *Manchester Guardian* (13th). His main contentions were that it was the established practice of mountaineers on such outings to separate and go their several ways if they wished to do so; that the practice was justifiable as helping to cultivate the self-reliance that mountaineers needed; and that Evans's companions were acting quite properly in letting him go his different way on that occasion.

Unfortunately, Walker made two references to our own Club by name. Each was harmless in itself. One said that "the members of such clubs as the Rucksack and the Scottish Mountaineers" acquired on the home mountains the self-reliance needed for the Alps, in particular for guideless expeditions there. The other reference stated that "most members of the Rucksack Club" took care to carry reserves of food. Yet the impression that those two references might well convey to an unknowledgeable reader was that our Club approved Walker's main contentions in support of Evans's companions.

The result was a protesting letter, addressed to Burns, from Pickstone in his retirement. He declared that Walker had as good as said that it was quite right to desert a weak or failing member on such an expedition. He pointed out that Walker himself had been very glad of company on one occasion when he had sprained his ankle in Eskdale. He (Pickstone) thought that the letter was disgraceful and that the Committee should dissociate the Club from Walker's views. Was there not an understood rule, that members should not communicate with the press in the Club's name and thereby identify the Club with views which might not be generally entertained? At a special meeting, the Committee decided that the President, Eustace Thomas, should inform Walker of his breach of that understood rule and that it should be set out in all future editions of the Handbooks, as indeed it has been.

Pickstone certainly put his finger on a serious omission from Walker's contentions. Even the strongest walker may have his off-days, which on such an expedition as a winter Marsden-Edale, in the necessarily limited daylight might have serious consequences if his companions did not notice it and stay with him until he had reached safe ground. The Bleaklow crossing for instance, is no respecter of persons. Eustace Thomas was said to have had a bad time on it once, and at least five past or future Colne-Rowsley men on different occasions were glad to escape to Glossop although the going had not been particularly arduous.

In the Evans case, however, his companions could hardly be blamed. His trouble appears to have been shortage of food, for the post mortem at the inquest showed that his stomach and pylorus were completely empty. But there would have been nothing to reveal such shortage to his friends unless he had begun to lag; and up to Featherbed Moss he had apparently not done so. When at last, from the slopes south of the river, they could see where he had got to, and that he had not lagged

behind but merely struck out on a course of his own, there would have been still nothing to tell them that anything was amiss.

The rest of the year 1925 at home does not seem to have produced anything of especial interest except a lecture by our member R.W.James \* on Shackleton's 1914/18 attempt to cross the Antarctic continent, on which expedition James was the Physicist. The story of how their ship, the *Endurance*, was crushed by the ice, of how the party managed to reach land at Elephant Island and of the prodigies of daring performed by Shackleton in voyaging for help in a 22 foot boat over 800 miles of sea in an Antarctic winter, made a story as exciting as any the Club can have listened to. "We hold it a privilege to have heard this lecture", Pigott (the Chairman) recorded in the Minutes

About this time the Committee became concerned with the question of limiting the membership, which the next AGM was to show had topped the 200 level for the first time. Was there a danger of our losing "the intimate social spirit which has been a feature of our organisation?" No conclusion was arrived at; but the suggestion was recorded that sponsors should be more careful whom they proposed for membership, and the Committee itself more drastic with defaulters.

June 1926 saw the first of our Photographic Exhibitions - suggested by Doughty the previous year and organised by himself and Burton. The exhibits numbered 90 pictures submitted by the members, and the entertainment included four short lectures, each concerned with a particular mountain-photographic subject. About 50 members attended and the event was adjudged successful enough to warrant a repeat next year.

For some time past we had been concerned about our headquarters at the Albion. Our concern in October 1920, as we have seen, was that the fees might become too high for us. Now came the more serious danger that the hotel might soon be pulled down. Various alternatives had been looked at; but it was not until Lindley Henshaw had discovered the Estate Exchange in Fountain Street that we found what we wanted. And on Friday 10th September 1926, we had our first meeting there, with 60 members present.

The 1926 number of the *Journal* was Wilding's last. Mention has already been made of his 1923 number with its fine article by Burns. Among other articles of interest to us today was "Misty Days on An Teallach" by the Editor. Each page of it



31. Reg James.

*\*Later on FRS and Professor of Physics at Capetown University.*

displayed his love of every aspect of the Highlands, which were to him as the Alps were to Burton. The number also contained Eustace Thomas's account of his - at last -successful assault on the Fell Record with full details of the times. He was also prominent in the 1924 number, this time with a long account, entitled "The Alps Revisited", of his first conquests there. But perhaps the article of best interest to us today in that number was Arnold Boyd's long and authoritative article "Birds of the British Hills".

After Wilding's first issue with its wealth of good material, it might well have been thought that he would fail to surpass it. Yet he did so with the issue of 1925. It is doubtful whether any mountaineering club could have produced a journal issue that began so splendidly as ours of 1925, with Eustace Thomas's photograph of the Grandes Jorasses, reproduced in gravure with the ridges seeming to stand out of the page, and Doughty's article "The Conventions of Mountaineering".

At about the time when someone had made a plea that nailed boots should not be used on certain climbs, the somewhat contrary edict was put forth - I think by the Fell and Rock - that the nailed boot should be the standard wear and that rubbers should be used only by experts on climbs of great severity. To this suggestion Doughty was strongly opposed. Far from leaving rubbers to the experts, he was known to allow a beginner to climb in them on his first day out, to help him acquire movement in balance at an early stage, provided he had begun the day with a climb or two in nails.

This friendly controversy stimulated him to examine mountaineering conventions as a whole. He first embodied his researches in a paper read before the



32. *Grandes Jorasses.*

Club; and later as the Journal article above mentioned. The boot convention is the first he deals with: "On this very question of footgear you can find as much dogma and sheer prejudice as would satisfy the most ardent Calvinist. There are men whom the mere smell of a rubber shoe will throw into a frenzy. To listen to them you would imagine that the primeval nailed boot arose out of some Swiss glacier - like Britain from out the azure main - at Heaven's express command."

Later he arrives at the conclusion that, as regards its conventions we treat mountaineering as a sort of game complete with the element of competition between climbers and a set of unwritten rules. The rest of the article is in illustration of these conclusions. So great an authority as Sir Arnold Lunn (who, among other distinguished claims to fame, produced the anthology of alpine prose and verse "The Englishman in the Alps") considered that Doughty's article was one of the best things written on mountaineering.

The rubber-shoe battle has long been won and many of Doughty's other points have either been accepted or are no longer relevant. For relevance today his article may be thought to take second place in the same issue to Wilding's article "The High Levels of Great Britain".

Prompted by C.E.Montague's suggestion that if anyone wanted to gain a vivid personal insight into the natural features of our country, he could not do better than ascend in turn a number of outstanding heights forming a chain from one end of England to another, Wilding proposed to make those or similar summits merely the connecting links in a walk over the highest points of England, Wales and Scotland. This he was able to do, not of course as a continuous walk, but in sections and as the weather allowed.

From the Cheviot to the Midlands the main backbone of the country could be followed with substantial interruptions only at the Tyne, Aire, and Calder gaps. To bridge the gap to the Cotswolds a sideways movement by way of Beeston and the Peckforton hills could be made to Wales, the Central Highlands of which - unique in England and Wales for the extent of desolation - could be followed till the Severn could be crossed at Newnham to reach the Cotswolds; thence by way of the Mendips, Quantocks, Exmoor and Dartmoor to Brown Willy in Cornwall. Many details of route and suggestions of places to stay at are given, in particular in the comparatively unfamiliar country from Wales southwards.

His last issue contains plenty of writing of interest but no article reaches the level of the two just considered. I have little doubt that the article which the Editor most appreciated was that of Manning on Liathach - a mountain which both of them thought the finest on the mainland.

On general editorial matters, Wilding followed Scott in his use of tailpiece pictures, but used more of them, and with our members Will Mellor and J.M.Lowe as artists. He began the practice, followed by his successor, of reproducing the frontispiece in photogravure. The Editor also reverted to Ewen's practice of printing the author's name under the title of the article, rather than tucked away somewhat shamefacedly at the end of it. He further improved the appearance of the main articles by adopting a slightly shorter line of type and adding a thirtyninth line to the full page - an arrangement that was to last unaltered for nearly fifty years.

The year 1926 also brought us accommodation still more valuable than new club rooms. After leaving Cwm Eigiau towards the end of 1920, the Club took no steps to find a new one until at the Committee meeting in February 1926, in response to "a growing desire to have a Club Hut of our own", a sub-committee was appointed to look for one. It was to be "in some local climbing or tramping area but not so difficult of access as was the Cwm Eigiau hut or even so far off as the Langdale Valley."

As most of our favourite climbing or walking grounds in the home area were in preserved territory, the chance of obtaining the consent of a landlord would surely have been small indeed; it was therefore not surprising that by July 1926, the sub-committee could only report "Nothing doing or likely". The darkest hour ..... before the year was out there arrived the famous message from the Hon. Secretary of the Climbers' Club, H.R.C.Carr.

Herbert Carr had been one of our own members for a few years. He had joined us during the war; but shortly afterwards, presumably finding, that his future lay in the south and extensively with the CC, he had not unreasonably left us. That he still had regard for us was shown by his message, which was that the CC had been offered the lease of a small farmhouse in the Ogwen Valley. As his own club was already in possession of another building in that valley (Helyg) and had extensive commitments elsewhere, they were unable to take up the offer; Carr wondered whether we should like to do so.

The Committee at that November meeting when the message was announced seem to have been in a dyspeptic mood, for the Minute, headed "House in Ogwen Valley" did little more than announce a sub-committee "to visit the house offered to the Club and report fully." Seldom can news of such importance have been so unenthusiastically received. There was no reference to Carr, far less of a letter of thanks to him. Presumably the message came by word of mouth or telephone, since no mention is made of a letter from him.

But if the main Committee seemed uninterested, certain members of the subcommittee, led by Heardman and backed by such enthusiastic supporters of the old hut as Dust and Uttley, were very much in favour. Opposition, relying mainly on the distance of the hut and the cost of putting it in order, was overborne, the terms were agreed, the necessary repairs and alterations were put in hand, and in March 1927 we had our first meet there.

Thus we arrived at Tal y Braich Uchaf - "T y B"; by those of us who knew it, best loved of the five huts which at various times we have occupied. Best situated, too. A hut possessing, almost in its back garden, the incomparable Tryfan, is at a great advantage over others less favoured. And though it lacked the proximity to the severest climbs possessed by Beudy Mawr, the range and variety of the neighbouring climbs from the scrambles on Tryfan to Suicide Wall were far greater.

Sufficient information about the Hut itself and the terms of its lease can be found in the comprehensive article "The New Club House", by Entwisle in the 1927 Journal. Something, however, needs to be said about certain of the persons concerned with it, whom the Journal does not fully mention.

Our landlord, old William Evans, resided at the neighbouring farm, Tal y Braich Isaf. He was something of an eccentric, given to unexpected visits to the Hut at

inconvenient times, especially when a crowded meet was in progress, and addressing the startled inmates in such terms as "You go up the mountain, yes?". Little harm was done, except to the nerves of any new member who happened to be alone in the Hut when one of these forays took place. The consensus of experienced opinion was that this eccentricity was a pose, the visits being occasioned by a landlord's natural desire to see what his tenants were up to. The fact that he drove a hard bargain over the terms of the lease offered some support to that view.

Very different was his brother, Ellis, a giant of a man in the prime of life with the unselfish kindness met with perhaps more often in rural Wales than in other parts of the island. He it was who, without complaint or even mention, performed the gruesome task of emptying the latrine bucket after each weekend. The provisions ordered for a meet and delivered by the local grocer to the farm were always carried by Ellis over the intervening 300 yards to the Hut, rather than left for us to collect. If in any other way he could help us he gladly did so.

The third person at the farm, housekeeper to the two brothers, was Mrs Jones. To her, at least, a tribute has been paid. This was by Robin Gray in his Editorial Notes in the 1936 Journal, on the occasion of her retirement: "When we first went to T y B Uchaf we soon discovered how lucky we were in having Mrs Jones as one of our neighbours; nearly ten years have passed by since then and during all that time Mrs Jones' kindness has never failed, no matter how often we troubled her. Many of us will miss her friendly welcome when she goes from T y B to live with her son, and there is no-one who has called for the key or for supplies at the farm who will not wish her all happiness in her new surroundings."



33. *Tal-y-Braich.*

For success at the venture, a good man was needed at the Hut itself. And in Fred Heardman the ideal Hut Warden was discovered. Something is said in a later part of this history of his prowess over the moors. With our coming to T y B he generously gave up most of his walking in order to concentrate on the efficient running of the Hut.

In a club of sporting amateurs such as ours, it is seldom necessary for an officer to be particularly strict with the members he deals with in the course of his duties. An editor dare not be so, lest he should lose his contributors. Even a treasurer can usually collect his dues by jollyng the peccant members along rather than by putting the bailiffs in. The officer who most needs to be strict is the Hut Warden - to ensure that the equipment is kept in proper order, the hut is left clean and tidy, devoid of perishable food at the end of each meet, and the hut fees are not forgotten in the turmoil of departure. He must, of course, have a sense of proportion: after all, we are only there for "fun" (in the broad sense employed by A.P.Herbert). But in the compromise between the two extremes of leniency and strictness, the really successful Warden will usually be found well on the strictness side of the mean point. He should, in short, number a Captain Bligh among his ancestors.

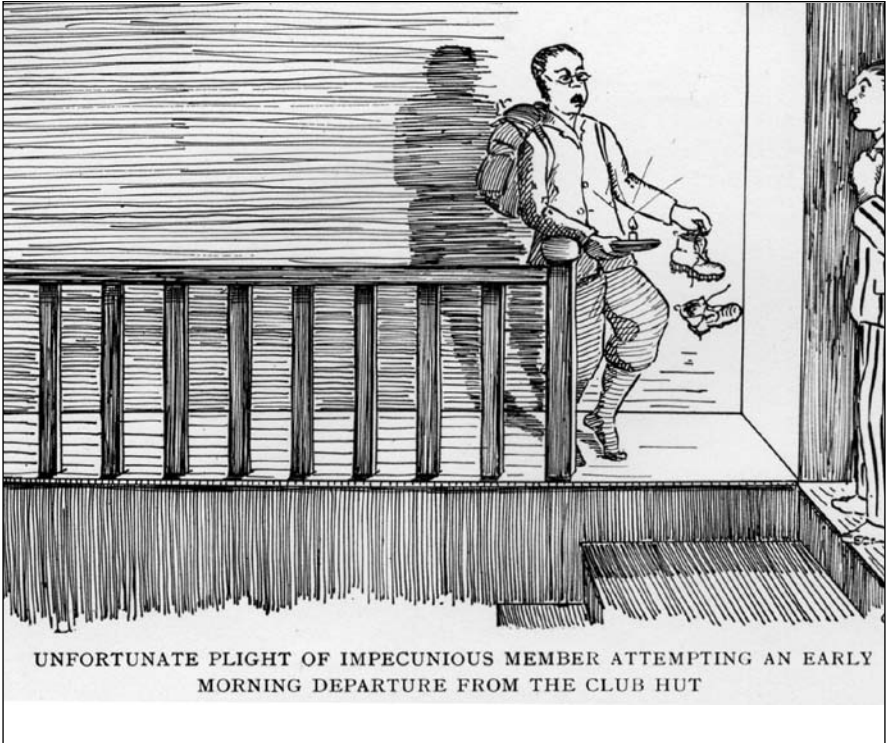
Heardman was such a Warden; perhaps not as severe with sinning members as was his contemporary Harry Spilsbury of the Wayfarers (greatest of British Hut Wardens past, present, and to come) but enough to have the Hut kept in admirable order during his term of office. How the Club viewed him when in action against a misbehaving member is shown by Cyril Ward's delightful drawing, facing page 457 of the 1930 Journal. On the administrative side he was supported by a strong Hut sub-committee including Dust as Treasurer and Uttley and Burton as members.

Many are the anecdotes connected with the Hut during the 12 peacetime years of our tenancy. There were, for instance, tales that it was haunted. This notion was supported by the experience of a party who after a bitter January night in the Hut went for a walk over the snowy Carneddss. On the summit of Pen Helig they were surprised to meet one of the most famous of Club members. On enquiry they learnt that he had been up there all night - stamping about to keep warm - a story to which the iced-up condition of his beard gave support. "Had I known last night there was a party at the Hut" he explained "I would have slept there. But I would not do so alone at any price." His interrogators were too stupefied by this explanation to ask for any further.

Then there was the occasion when on a winter evening of rain and wind a party of three, clustered round the fire, heard a gentle knock at the door. Somewhat anxiously they looked at each other. Who could it be at that time of night? And to knock without entering? Perhaps it was old William Evans on one of his forays. But the opening of the door revealed no visitor on the step.

A little later it happened again: two knocks this time, and again nothing visible but the blackness and the rain and the lights of a car or two on the distant Holyhead road. And again the knocks came - three now, in a slow and ominous iteration. But by now the more intrepid of the party were keeping a close watch on the door, and lo! the ghost was unmasked. For the spectral knocking, was found to be caused by an old hairbrush which for some reason was suspended by a string from a hook on





34. Ward's drawing from the 1930 Journal.

the inside of the door. The vibration of the door due to the wind had set the brush in pendulum-like oscillation towards and away from the door, to hit it each time the amplitude of the swing was large enough.

A less hair-raising memory is that of the soaking wet afternoon when, on returning to the Hut, we found it almost overwhelmingly occupied - by strangers - six enormous young men, refugees from a flooded camp, shedding water all over the floor and loudly regaling each other with smoke-room stories amidst hut-shaking merriment: our first acquaintance with John Jenkins and his friends of the BU - sorry, UBMC. Some were later to join us - including John himself - and greatly enhance our pleasure whenever they were with us.\*

*\*Another Hut anecdote - the Sausage Story - is too widely known to need more than a footnote entry. The leader of a Hut meet (scandal whispered the great HW himself) who expected about ten to turn up, decided on for Saturday's supper in a ration of three per person. He therefore included "30 sausages" in the order he sent to our Bettws grocers.*

*When he arrived at the Hut, he found the advance party artistically engaged in festooning the premises with string after string of sausages, totalling some 200 sausages in all. To a grocer, 30 sausages meant 30 lbs. Sunday was spent disposing of them, gratis, to the local inhabitants.*

The elation due to the opening of the Hut in March 1927 was sobered before the end of May by the sudden death of the Club's most popular veteran, Philip Minor, in his 66th year. He was still holding his original office of Treasurer and in his self-imposed auxiliary capacity had introduced to the Club every new member in the past 25 years.

Scott's tribute to him was placed first in the 1928 Journal rather than among the "In Memoriam" pages. I have already drawn from it in my attempt to portray Minor's benign and friendly character when introducing him to the reader in Part 1 of this history. Under Brierley's tuition he had become a sound climber both on rock and in the Alps. He was elected to the Alpine Club in 1911, our first "home-grown" member to be so honoured. His favours in this country were mainly bestowed on Snowdon. He celebrated his hundredth ascent of it, at the age of 56, by climbing it three times in one day.

When President during the years 1917 to 1919 he was elected President of the Fell & Rock - the one Rucksacker (so far) to occupy both Chairs at the same time. Though he was never quite himself after his only son had been killed in action in 1916, he continued to take the fullest part in the Club's activities and was present at the Committee meeting earlier in the month in which he died. For his share in establishing from the start of the Club its unique style of pervading friendliness between members we must ever hold him in regard.

Pickstone died in the following year. Again, Scott, his closest friend for 25 years, wrote the notice. Again it was placed first in the Journal (1929). There is little to add to what we have quoted from Scott about him in Part 1. After a breakdown in 1923, he never again attended a Club meeting. For a while, however, despite a gradual decline, he kept a close watch on Club affairs, as his controversy with Walker showed.

He had never been particularly interested in rock-climbing, or in the Alps, where his only season had been marred by bad weather. But his love for the homeland hills came little lower than his religion (he was a devout Christian). "He loved them and everything that belonged to them, the buzzards and peregrines that soared aloft, the croak of the raven in the lonely Welsh valley, the whimbrel's whistle on the higher moors, the tiny flowers that carpet the ground." His austere and reticent character makes him loom more obscurely than Minor across the gap of 50 years; but for his share in establishing the reputation and good fellowship of the Club we owe him equal gratitude.

The Club received a further shock a few months later in the accident to Pryor at Laddow during the meet after the Dinner in November, within a year after his distinguished Presidency. An account of the accident will be found in Eric Byrom's part of this history.

About this time the Committee took two resolutions of some importance. At the January 1928 Committee the age limit of candidates for membership was modified from the 19 years minimum which had lasted since 1919, to 19, with a special scrutiny below 21. This was to last unchanged until 1964.

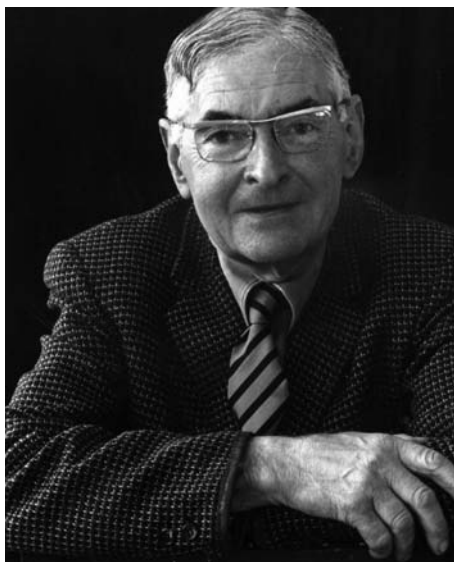
Then in December 1929 the first question arose, at the instance of the Wayfarers, of the reciprocal use of our respective huts. As our Hut Committee had

failed to agree between allowing the fullest interchangeable rights without reserve, or limiting the number of such interchangeable visits, they referred the matter to the main Committee. There after “a very long and interesting discussion” it was decided by 12 votes to 2 to allow the Wayfarers over a trial period of 12 months the use of Tal y Braich on full membership terms for 12 weekends. The dates were to be agreed between the two clubs but the main holiday weekends were to be avoided.

In 1927 an event had occurred which was to benefit the Club for the next quarter of a century. This was the foundation in that year of the Manchester University Mountaineering Club. The documentary evidence of how it began and one’s recollections of the references to its “birth” in the speeches at its early Dinners tend to be obscured in a haze of jocosely obstetrical metaphors. One centre of fertilisation was certainly the University’s Chemical Department, where a fierce-eyed student named Linnell and a confederate student named Hartley (both of whom were soon to join us) hatched plans among their test-tubes for celebrating the birth of the new club by an assault on the Grépon. Such divergences from their official studies as may thereby have occurred would no doubt have been overlooked by a hill-loving professor.

It seems equally certain, however, that the seminal seed for the club and the first moves for its procreation came from our member, Wilson Hey, assisted at the accouchement by such other Rucksack Club members on the University staff as Professor Eastwood (Law) and Harold Gerrard (Electrotechnics), old students such as Doughty, present students such as the two embryo chemists above referred to, and other future Rucksackers such as Professor Mordell (Mathematics).

The immense influence of Hey and Doughty was hardly needed to make certain that the Rucksack Club would help the struggling infant. Use of Tal y B was



35. *Harold Gerrard.*

generously allowed, although the new club had as yet no reciprocal rights to offer. Officially it was allowed only one week a year; but use of the Hut at other times by small MUMC parties was in practice winked at so long as each party was chaperoned by one of its members who was also a Rucksacker. Unrestricted attendance at our evening lectures was also permitted

There is no reason to think that our motives were other than altruistic. Certain of our old stagers, such as Dust and Uttley of the Hut Committee, were inclined to look askance at any student types found in the Hut, and there were occasional complaints from other members of its

being left untidy after an MUMC visit. That the new club would prove a training ground for future Rucksack members of value (the writer of these pages excepted) would not have been apparent for several years. In all, over 20 MUMC trained members joined the Rucksack Club between 1928 and the next war, and such recruits continued to arrive for a few years after the end of it. \*

Hardly had the new club begun than in September 1929 it lost one of the most prominent of its younger members. He was also one of our own members, and by his death we suffered as grievous a loss of a young member as we had sustained since the war. In that summer Neville Martin was carrying out a highly active programme at Zermatt. He had had only one previous season in the Alps, but he had acquired through his wide and ardent reading a knowledge of their mountains and the routes up them that surprised even the widely-read Doughty and the greatly experienced Wilson Hey who was with Neville at Zermatt. A blister on the heel began to give troubles. Septicaemia set in - in those days there were none of our potent antibiotics - and despite Hey's early attention to it and subsequent hospital treatment at Brigue, it rapidly spread and caused his death.

After graduating with distinction in English literature at Cambridge and attending a course of instruction at Manchester University, he had become a junior master at Mill Hill school. He had joined the Rucksack Club in 1927 at the age of 23. A little later, he joined the infant MUMC. There his literary talent ensured his immediate election to the post of Editor, with instructions to produce the first MUMC Journal. It appeared in the year of his death. Those of us fortunate enough to possess a copy of the first number (in its handsome red cover with Henry Rowntree's imposing mountain drawing) have a lasting monument to the editor's skill in the taste with which the line drawings and small photographs are inserted among the text, and in the literary standard of the articles.

One of those who had the privilege of Neville's friendship during the few years he was with us remembers him as "a charming companion, as goodnatured and cheerful when he was tired out as he was at the beginning of the day; not very robust, but alive with enthusiasm - the kind of enthusiasm that is infectious but in no way overbearing." Such memories of him have remained warm to this day.

At the AGM of 1930, one of our senior members, William Hughes, proposed that we should become affiliated to the Ramblers' Federation. During the discussion, some dissatisfaction was expressed at the brusque way in which the Committee had rejected such a proposal in 1924 (see above). At length it was decided that the new Committee should reconsider this request and present a reasoned report to the next (1931) AGM.

*\* When I first read this I had the temerity to correct Brockbank. The traffic along what Joe Walmsley once called "that well trodden path from the MUMC to the Rucksack Club" continued apace until well into the 1960s, when the University authorities banned former students from retaining their membership. At least 130 past and present Club members were in the MUMC, including about 20 who were students with me around 1960, and they still constitute more than 10% of our current membership. -RB*

The matter bedevilled the unfortunate Committee throughout the year, "taking up the major portion of its time" as it eventually reported. As the result of at least five Committee Meetings, it recommended by "a substantial majority" of the Committee that we should not affiliate. The report expressed in conclusion the hope that its decision would be taken as final. The AGM accepted this decision. Those present warmly appreciated the generous manner in which Hughes, whilst regretting the decision, accepted it and thanked the Committee for the trouble taken to arrive at it.

The main argument in favour of affiliation was that we and the RP had interests in common and by joining the RP we should strengthen any action to protect those interests which both parties thought desirable. On the other hand it was urged that "the status, personnel and purpose of the RP were very different from ours; we were a mountaineering club, and rambling was not included in that term." It might be desirable at times to take joint action with the RP, but we did not need to be affiliated to do so.

A little more than a year after that decision had been taken, we received an invitation from the newly formed YHA to affiliate with them and appoint a delegate to serve on their Council. Here we had less misgivings and the motion to affiliate was passed that same evening by 7 to 5, on the ground that "our attitude towards this beneficial educational movement whose aims are akin to ours should be friendly."

During the years 1930 and 1931 certain far-reaching changes were made among the officers. When Morley Wood had become one of the Secretaries in succession to Entwisle at the 1922 AGM, Burns had taken over Entwisle's duties of securing the best lecturers and the guests for the Dinner, leaving Morley to attend to the general secretarial work, such as keeping the Minutes, corresponding with applicants, and introducing those accepted. So warmly did he carry out this last duty, that at least one of those members who had been fortunate enough to have joined whilst Morley was Secretary has treasured the letter of welcome which Morley sent him. At the end of 1930, Morley announced his intention to retire.

At the Club night in July 1933 it was the grievous task of Entwisle, who was then President, to announce Morley's death. There is little to add here to Eric Byrom's account of him in a later part of this history. And those fortunate enough to possess a copy of our 1934 Journal can read a noble tribute to him by his great friend Fred Pigott. As Wilding was to say some 20 years after Morley's death, "No member who has gone from us has left a more endearing memory."

He was succeeded as Secretary in January 1931 by Arthur Burns, the only son of the co-founder. He had been accepted for membership in November 1927, the Committee paying him the appropriate compliment of not requiring a qualification test. A commercial artist by profession, he had already signalled his presence by beginning at the 1929 Dinner a series of amusing and beautifully executed designs for the Dinner menus. As one wades through the otherwise undecorated pages of the Club's Minutes, those decorative menus surprise and delight the eye as much as they must have done on their first appearance.



**36. Forrester at Tunstead.**



**37. Forrester Scratching Underground.**

Another resignation of importance in 1930 was that of Fred Heardman from both his offices of Hut Warden and Outdoor Organiser on his setting up as joint host with Stephen ("Mac") Forrester at Tunstead House on the western foothills of Kinder, which was to prove a second home to our Kinder specialist for the next 20 years. Mac was too rare and diverse a character to be done justice to in a necessarily brief space; but those who possess a 1963 Journal will find him brought comprehensively to life in all his diversity - host humorist, moorland lover, fanatical caver, quietly sincere socialist and pacifist - in a memorial notice by his friend of many years Frank Kiernan.

Within six months of Heardman's retirement, the AGM of 1931 passed unanimously a resolution making the Hut Warden ex-officio on the main Committee. Whether the closeness of that decision to his retirement has any significance I do not know. The wardenship proved difficult for other suitable members to reconcile with the demands of their professions. No less than five of them occupied the post during the remaining nine years to the war. Luckily the presence on the Hut Committee throughout that time of the Hut's guardian angel, F.A.Dust, was enough to ensure that it came to little harm.

For the next Outdoor Organiser we were fortunate to find in 1931, in the person of Alan Deane, an officer ideally suited to the post. It was not until 1937, however, that the post carried Committee membership.

In the autumn of 1930 we lost our first President. Professor Dixon had proved an admirable choice. As he was an exceedingly busy man - not only a, world authority on his branch of chemistry but also a distinguished educationist very active in the Manchester & Salford districts - we did not ask him to chair the main committees but instead employed for that purpose an elected Chairman of Committee. \*

*\*That practice continued for years after our Presidents were home-grown, and the modern practice in which the chair is taken by the President (when present) appears to have been drifted into during Kelly's term of office.*

He had always been willing to help us and had probably never missed a Dinner until that of 1924. His charm, modesty, and wit are delightfully shown in the letter regretting that his doctor had forbidden him to attend that function; it is quoted in full in Scott's obituary notice of him in the 1931 Journal,

Another senior member who died about this time (February 1931) was Ernest Manning. In his youth he had been a keen oarsman and Association Football player. By the time he had joined us - in 1914 at the age of 40 - his sporting interest had become the pursuit of the Lakeland foxes with the fell packs. His experience with them gave him a knowledge of the fells that was considered almost unrivalled.

Later in life he was drawn to the wilder and more desolate mountain regions, in particular the Western Highlands. His article on Liathach in the 1926 Journal is still one of the best we have had devoted to a single British mountain. It was with respect to Liathach that he formulated the widely accepted opinion that one does not really know a mountain until one has visited every corrie and traversed every ridge.

He was a very private man; but his sincerity and friendship and his intense love of the hills made of him a companion whose enthusiasm was infectious. It could even survive and thrive in an unusual way to the wildest weather. A storm seemed to stir him deeply and make him oblivious to its discomforts. Even at home at Withington, and in middle age, if there was any unusually violent storm of wind and rain he must be out in it, discoursing to his companion - if one was with him - of wild storms he had experienced in more remote regions.

Twice within three years the Committee concerned itself with the rules covering applications, each time at the instigation of Maurice Linnell. In March 1931 he suggested that applications should be more closely scrutinised. In response, a sub-committee revised what was then Section 2 of the Footnote to Rule 5. In those days it read: "A candidate must show a sufficient walking or climbing qualification, which indicates an active and permanent interest in the pursuits for which the Club stands." Linnell's objection to this was that it could be interpreted as allowing mere walkers to join. The sub-committee accordingly revised it to read: "Candidates are expected to show evidence of a considerable experience and an active interest in some, at least, of the pursuits of the Club as set forth in Rule 2. Initiative in mountaineering, such as the leading of climbs, exploration etc., will be taken into consideration." The "some, at least," would eliminate the mere walker. That it would also eliminate the mere rock climber was not apparently realised. The main Committee adopted this suggestion, on the grounds that "the progressive advance in mountaineering technique and, in particular, the great increase of interest in mountain pursuits demand as a natural corollary a steady increase in the standard of qualification for entrance to the Club." Section 2, thus amended, but becoming Section 3 in 1964, remained unaltered for a little over 30 years. In 1963 the "at least" was dropped (presumably as being redundant) and in 1974 "an active interest" was amended to read "an active and sustained interest", these changes being first apparent in the 1964 and 1975 Handbooks.

In January 1933 Linnell, still not happy, perhaps about some recent entrants (hardly the writer of these pages, for whom Linnell himself had stood chief



38. *Extra-curricular Activity, 1932.*



39. .... and in 1933.

sponsor), and considering that some proposers were skimping their task, suggested a tightening of what was then Section 3 to the Footnote. In those days it read: "Every candidate must be vouched for in writing by his proposer as being in other respects a desirable member." The Committee agreed to displace this by: "The form of application is to be sent in by the proposer accompanied by a covering letter stating the extent of his acquaintance with the candidate, and giving some first-hand information regarding his qualifications and suitability for membership." The new wording first appeared in the 1934 Handbook and has remained unchanged (except by becoming Section 4 in 1964) to the present day.

During Easter 1932, an accident occurred on Crib Goch to a non-member. The rescue party included some of our members from our meet at Beddgelert. As the result of their experience in bringing down an injured man over such difficult ground, the need for a stretcher and first-aid outfit at Tal y Braich was stressed at the April Committee Meeting. As a further result, a sub-committee, under A.S.Pigott was appointed "to go into the matter and make a recommendation of the best type of stretcher for this purpose." Probably few members at that meeting foresaw what momentous results would follow.

There is fortunately little need to introduce the incomparable Fred Pigott. Eric Byrom has dealt with his services to rock-climbing - in particular his conquest of Clogwyn Du'r-arddu, and his great ascents abroad in the next part of this history, But it is with an even greater subject that his name will always be linked: his dominating association with the initial stretcher committee, later broadened to cover British mountain rescue in general, for the next 40 years.

For the next two years much thought was given to the type of stretcher needed. One or two known types were tested but proved unsatisfactory. At length the services of Eustace Thomas were enlisted to design a stretcher that would be primarily suitable for mountain rescue. He set about the task with his customary drive and engineering ability and at the Easter Meet of 1934 the prototype model was available for testing. By then the Fell & Rock had joined us in this matter and





**40. Stretcher Field Trial.**

the original sub-committee had become the Combined Stretcher Sub-Committee of the Fell & Rock and Rucksack Clubs (later simplified to the Joint Stretcher Committee) under the chairmanship of Dr.C.P.Lapage, who was a member of both clubs. Its report was presented to the AGM of 1935. Apart from dealing with political and administrative matters concerning the distribution of the stretchers and the payment for them, it reported that

though various types of stretcher might be suitable, the one designed by Eustace Thomas had their preference. As an appendix to the Report was Eustace's own notes on "Designing a Stretcher for Mountain Use."

So sound has his design proved that no structural alteration of importance has been found necessary during its 40 years of use in all parts of Britain. Details of its construction should be familiar enough to most members not to need description here. The Lapage Report also included details of the first-aid equipment intended to accompany the stretcher. In brief, it comprised two rucksacks which in addition to such items as ropes and splints, contained equipment the main purpose of which was to keep the patient warm - e.g. a slit eiderdown bag with detachable waterproof cover, hot-water bottles, a kettle for filling them, and one of the paraffin-pressure types of stove.

The Report was accepted by the 1935 AGM with many expressions of gratitude. Especial thanks were given to Eustace Thomas for not only having designed a stretcher that seemed to provide what was wanted but also for presenting the first of them to the Club.

Though a specification for the whole equipment had thus been drawn up, much was left to be done as regards finance and administration, and every Committee Meeting in 1935 included discussions on such matters as co-operation with other clubs, the centres for location of the equipment, and the arrangements for paying for it.

Early in the 1930s the Club was becoming uneasy about the Hut. Half the lease had run, and substantial repairs and improvements were needed. Attempts to buy the Hut were made; but when at last a figure had been agreed with the Evanses their lawyers stepped in to advise them against selling to us "in any circumstances". On learning this, the Committee at its meeting in November 1935 immediately agreed to look for a site on which to build. The subsequent search included the investigation of one or two existing buildings neither of which was found to be suitable.

An attempt to obtain a renewal of the ten years' lease had little better success, for the Evanses would only agree to it subject to allowing cancellation at one year's notice by either party. As on those terms there would be a chance of our being turned out at any time after a year from the expiry of the existing lease in January 1937, hardly any expenditure would be justifiable. Some solution to this particular difficulty was supplied by an ingenious plan devised by Hey, who was then President, and accepted by the Evanses. We would expend at once an arbitrary minimum amount - £90 was agreed - sufficient to put the Hut in good order. Should the Evanses turn us out within the ten years of the extended lease, they would pay us the part of that £90 proportional to the years remaining.

During 1939 an option had been secured on a new site close to the cart track leading up to Glan Llugwy farm but as no arrangements had been made to define the site by fencing, our entitlement to it was found to have been lost by the end of the war.

We have already met Wilson Hey: the surgeon who tried to save Pryor's leg and the statesman who founded the MUMC. It is time to introduce him formally. He was such a colourful personality that to those of us who knew him no reminder is necessary. To those who did not, there is Fred Pigott's admirably warm and comprehensive obituary notice in the 1957 Journal. Thus not much need be said here.

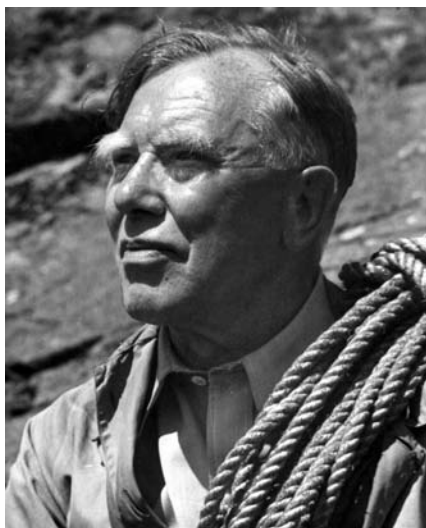
When he joined the Club in 1922 he was one of Manchester's leading surgeons. At the time of his retirement, at least one of the major operations he had perfected was known throughout the surgical world. Until his Presidency in 1936 he was not very active with the Club out of doors except as a fairly regular attendee at the Easter meets. The need to wear gloves when rock-climbing so as to protect his surgeon's fingers against abrasion kept him off the harder routes; and though in his youth he had been a strong fell-walker - a fact that few of the Club were to realise until the second year of his Presidency - he had no longer the leisure for many of the more strenuous of the Club's walks by the time he had joined it.

He may well have felt more at home among the academic shades of his offspring, the University club. Those of us who began our mountain life in it found him as stimulating a companion on the hills as he was entertaining by the fireside.

In order to keep fit for the Alps (his distinguished career in which is referred to in Eric Byrom's part of this history) he for some years rented one of the houses at the Ashes farm (near Tunstead). Thither he would transport his family and secretariat of a summer's weekend, and himself sally forth for fast solo days over the moors.\*

If his personality was colourful, so was his appearance, with his ruddy complexion, strong features, and the corn-coloured, tousled head of hair and

*\*The lease included the use of a locked outdoor privy. His family seldom allowed him to forget the occasion when, after visiting that convenience first thing, he departed for a day on the hills with the key in his pocket; thereby subjecting his female entourage to an increasing pressure of embarrassment until his late afternoon return.*



41. Wilson Hey.



42. Maurice Linnell.

sprouting eyebrows. And with it - unexpectedly - the gentlest of voices. He had an inventive turn of mind, exercised not only in his profession but also in the Alps and in the general conduct of affairs, as we have just seen with regard to Tal y Braich.

With his professional skill he was exceedingly generous. He never accepted a fee where the patient was a Rucksacker, or even a non-member mountaineer; and dealt with offers of payment in such a gentle off-hand manner as to free the patient from feelings of embarrassment. For the sake of injured British mountaineers in general he was generous with his valuable time as a member of the Stretcher Committee, of which he became Chairman at the death of Lapage in 1947, and to ensure the provision of morphia in the first-aid kits he was to put at risk his extensive practice by deliberately courting the prosecution of 1949.

If he had a fault it was a tendency to mild displays of temperament when thwarted by persons or circumstance. Thus in the MUMC. His founding of it had made him not unnaturally consider himself as its primal patriarch, and so he was apt to be put out if the committee of that club, whilst taking care to keep in touch with the President of the day, forgot to do so with the Founder.\*

He again had a Rucksack patient in the autumn of 1933, when one of our new and younger members, G.D.Nicholl, fell out of Kern Knotts Crack whilst attempting to lead it as one pitch. Hey took charge of the injured man had him conveyed to one of his wards, and did what he could to save him. But the spinal injury could not be remedied, and Nicholl died in December 1935.

The accident was the source of a "very long and exhaustive discussion" at the Committee meeting of February 1934. It was at length decided that "in the event

*\*I myself underwent some tremendous wiggings from him for my conduct in such matters but though they were not always deserved I forgave him a hundredfold for his many kindnesses towards me.*

of any climbing accident which may happen in the future in which any member of the Club is involved a committee of enquiry be appointed to make the fullest investigations." The purpose of such investigation, it was emphasised was "not that of mere criticism or censure, but to ascertain weaknesses which might be avoided in future."

Sadly to relate this resolution had to be implemented before the year was out as the result of the death of Maurice Linnell on Ben Nevis on 31st March and that of W.V.Cooper through a rock fall in Cheddar Gorge on 6th May. The sub-committee appointed to investigate both accidents had Doughty, as President, in the Chair.

Of all the young climbers who had helped to start the University club, none except perhaps Neville Martin was as dedicated as Maurice Linnell. Though he possessed other skills and interests, he seemed to live only to climb - to climb rock, rather than hills or mountains - and he displayed in that pursuit the stern devotion of a Covenanter to his Kirk.

He was born in Stockport, like that other dedicated climber, Joe Brown. The move of his parents to Skelsmergh (two miles north of Kendal) when he was ten years old created in him a love for the district which, although he was to achieve his greatest success elsewhere, he was never to lose.

For transport he possessed during his student days a solo motor cycle; as often as not he had his climbing partner on the pillion. He was an expert but impatient rider. When on his way to his Kendal home without a passenger he expected to be through Lancaster in the hour. Few winter road conditions could stop him. Although he had many a spill at icy corners neither he nor his machine ever sustained much damage. His pillion passengers viewed these little contretemps less philosophically, and a sigh of relief went round when it was learnt that Maurice had changed his solo machine for a combination.

His early climbing history belongs more to the MUMC. Though he joined us in 1928 he rarely turned out on meets; his view was that the main function of a club like ours was to bring climbers together and let them make their own private outdoor arrangements. Nevertheless he was a regular attender at the evening lectures and - as we have seen - an effective member of the Committee. Eric Byrom deals with his climbing career with us in his part of this history.

For a Lakeland dweller, he looked curiously foreign. This suggested some distant French ancestry but in fact the family roots lay in Cornwall. His appearance was not combined with a Gallic vivacity; he could be very dour among strangers. With his friends of an evening in camp he was very different; as congenial and cheerful a companion as any, the stern Covenanter put aside till the cold grey dawn of the morrow. The extent of his dedication was shown by the fact that shortly after he had teamed up with A.W.Bridge, they were away together on over 70 consecutive weekends.

On his friends his influence was lasting. Even those of us who did not acquire the full extent of his dedication, recalled him often to mind years after his death. Sometimes we were inspired by that memory to attempt climbs or expeditions which might otherwise have daunted us.

In 1934 Doughty resigned from the editorship, having completed his second volume of four numbers. He had carried out the work with the distinction expected of him. True, he had not begun too well. He apparently felt that the Journal needed enlivening, more in the style of Scott's rather than Wilding's, and so had had, or had accepted, the idea of running a three-part humorous serial, to be written by three anonymous members, the subject being a love story in the Alps.

It is strange that so sagacious a man did not realise that it is seldom given to ordinary mortals to produce good humorous matter to order on a prescribed subject. The long history of our Journal shows that the best humorous articles were woven out of the colourful threads of the writers' personality or - to put it less fancifully - were on subjects that suited them. Collier's "The Highland Nights' Entertainment" (1907), Dust's two articles (1908 & 1929), Morley Wood's "Climbing Plans" (1932), and Forrester's "Boulder Trundling" (1931) and "Scratchings Underground" (1935) - to mention only writers no longer with us bear witness to this. So the serial fell rather flat; except for some of the illustrations such as RCJ 1927:52, and 1928:179 - which however were by non-members.

He made more than amends by greatly expanding and making more personal the "Editorial" pages. Hitherto, our editors had confined these pages to little more than such Journal matters as details of back numbers, attribution of tailpieces, thanks to contributors, and miscellaneous snippets of information such as short notes of members' activities.\*

The first "Editorial" notes, so headed, were Wilding's, in his first number (1923). He too was mainly concerned with Journal matters; but included a mention of the formation of the MAM and one or two other non-Journal items. Alas! That was his only utterance from the Chair. Doughty's first utterance, headed simply "Editorial", ran to twice the length of Wilding's but generally dealt, though in a much lighter manner, with such similar subjects as the Journal and news of members. Like Wilding, too, he used the editorial "we". By his next, he had settled into what was to prove his own personal style, with the "we" now "I" and his topics widened to include not only Club affairs such as the constitution of the Committee (were there too many ex-officio members?) but also mountaineering news in general.

Later, he widened his remarks still further to include points of style such as defending, against a notional attack by Wilding, his (Doughty's) use of the first person singular. After disposing of this, he went on to lament the frequent absence of first-person pronouns from descriptive articles: e.g. "The hut was left at midnight and the foot of the rocks reached 3 hrs. later; here a halt was made for breakfast." How much better to say, "We left the hut at midnight and 3 hrs. later reached the foot of the rocks, where we stopped for breakfast."

*\*It is from two of such items that we learn of Eustace Thomas's three attempts on the Manchester to Blackpool walking races of 1919/21. His best time was the last: 9 hours 9 mins. 30 secs., and coming in fourth.*

In 1933 he devoted a separate article, entitled "All These Journals" to answering Longland's plea for a single journal. Somewhat surprisingly he at length came down sufficiently on Longland's side to advocate a single "all-embracing" club and journal, in which the present clubs would appear as "Sections" (in the continental manner) with their own news sheets. He admitted that the fusion would not prove of much value unless the Alpine Club, which would have the most to lose by joining, could be persuaded to do so.

Perhaps the most valuable feature of his editorials were his references to recent Committee decisions of importance and the reasons for them. Thus his 1933 number refers to the amendment to the rules for applicants which required covering letters from the proposers. And in his next and last number he mentions the decision to investigate all climbing accidents in which a member was involved.

At the actual technicalities of editing he was a past master in the presentation of print and in especial at that most difficult of editorial tasks, the rapid effecting of necessary amendments of the submitted copy with the minimum disturbance to it.

With so many good articles in his eight numbers, a selection on literary or mountaineering merit would be impracticable. A few articles which are still perhaps of factual interest may however be mentioned: Bower's "Climbing Mechanics" (1927), which Doughty believed "to be also the first of its kind". Doughty's own "Some Knotty Points" (1929), though in part no doubt superseded by Tarbuck. Eustace Thomas's "My Four-Thousands" (1929) with his complete list of them; supplemented in 1933 by his article on the Diables. Corbett's list of "Twenty-fives" (1929); supplemented by Moss in 1933.

His skill as a photographer helped him on the practical side. Here he introduced a new feature "The Rucksack Club Portrait Gallery" consisting of informal photographs of well-known members. Most annoyingly, he neglected to name the sitters, and so rendered many of the portraits of scant interest to us now.

Continuing the reprehensible habit of his two predecessors he did not take much trouble over the indexes at the ends of his two volumes. It is said that he delegated the task to someone else. Certainly he could not have checked them, otherwise he would surely have noticed the absence from the index of his first volume of any mention by title or author of Dust's inimitable article "The Caucasus". (It is hidden among the Proceedings pages of the 1929 number, on page 361).

Half-way through his editorship he made a change that was to benefit the Journal, and still more its editors, for the next forty years: he changed the printers. In those days the Cloister Press at Heaton Mersey, to whom the Journal became entrusted, was a small firm specialising in commercial work of very good quality. From the first, they appear to have had a regard for us out of all proportion to the work we gave them.\*

Nothing was too much trouble to meet the Editor's requirements and great care was taken to ensure the best results from the blocks. There seemed to be numbered among their compositors men who had somehow acquired a familiarity with

*\*The cost of the Journal in those days, including the blocks, was usually little more than £100.*

mountaineering terms, for the galley proofs were exceptionally clean, with rarely more than one compositor's fault per galley.

The excellent printing of our Journal brought the Cloister further work of that kind. Both the Fell & Rock and the Climbers' Club took their journals there, and the Second Editions of the Fell & Rock's guides were printed there under Kelly's supervision.

In 1934, the year of his retirement from the Editorship, Doughty became President. From what was said earlier in this history about his ability as a member of Committee, it will be appreciated that his performance when as President he occupied the Chair was of the highest excellence.

Again quoting Robin Gray: "He brought out everyone's point of view (including that of such diffident small fry as I was in those days). He knew when to allow a humorous digression and when and how to keep the discussion to the point. And after discussion of a knotty or contentious point, his summing up would be concise and masterly, conspicuously fair to different view points; and very often when he had finished, the knot had miraculously been unravelled or the contention lifted."

At the Dinner held at the Midland Hotel in 1936 he toasted his Presidential successor, Wilson Hey. My memory still holds a clear picture of Doughty standing outside the hotel afterwards, talking to some of his friends and wearing his decrepit old balaclava in sublime disregard of its impropriety in those opulent precincts. That was the last I saw of him. When the Committee assembled for their December meeting, those who had not already heard the news were shocked to learn that he was dead.

He had not been well for a year or more. A thyroid operation in the summer of 1935 had restored him enough to lead an MGS trek in August 1936 and to climb in Bavaria with our recent German guests shortly afterwards. But his resistance to infection was running low and was insufficient to allow him to survive a mastoid



43. Club Transport ca. 1925.

operation shortly after the 1936 Dinner. He was 47. His death at an age when many further years of his wise guidance might reasonably have been expected, still stands as the most grievous loss that the Club has sustained.

The Club speedily decided to publish in book form a selection of his various writings on mountaineering. The task of making the selection and seeing the book through the press was undertaken by Kelly, his climbing partner of the earlier years. He set about it with such vigour that by the late autumn of 1937 the "Hill-Writings of J.H.Doughty" was published. It took the form of a hard-backed octavo of 150 pages, printed by the Cloister Press. The bulk of the material was selected from his articles in the *Rucksack* and *Fell & Rock* journals with the important addition from 1931 of a selection of his reviews of mountaineering books for the *Manchester Guardian*. The book included a memoir; it was unsigned, but almost certainly by Kelly, who had also written the obituary notice in our 1937 Journal.

It was from the memoir that many of us realised with surprise how wide had been Doughty's interests and attainments. Apart from his profession - in which he was eminent enough to be President of the Manchester Mathematical Society at the time of his death and to be a member of the Joint Matriculation Board of the Northern Universities - and apart, of course, from the mountains, his greatest interest appears to have been music. He must have been close to a professional standard of musicianship. He had lectured on sonata form with illustrations by himself at the piano, and was selected to serve on the committee set up by Sir Henry Hadow to draw up a music syllabus for Higher School Certificate. But "of all the admirable traits in his character", the memoir records, "his great liking for human companionship stood out first and foremost."

The Club can be proud that its early tradition of an informal friendliness which took small regard of social or intellectual status proved so congenial to him, and can be grateful that he added so much of his own individuality to sustain and enrich that tradition.

A valuable feature of Club life since almost its earliest days up to almost its present ones was that of the "Thursday lunch". For over 30 years the Clarion Cafe in Market Street allowed us a room to ourselves from 12.30 to 2.30 each Thursday. There members whose place of business was within reach of the cafe repaired for lunch, to talk Club shop and discuss plans for the weekend. In March 1936 the Clarion closed. As it can seldom be convenient for a restaurant to provide a private room on only one day a week, we were fortunate in soon finding new quarters willing to do so; and at the Cumberland cafe in Deansgate, now also no more, we enjoyed a room to ourselves every Thursday for the next 13 years.

In each of three successive Februaries in the years 1935/7, the Club was privileged to hear a lecture of surpassing interest. In the first of them, Professor Graham Brown described the ascent of Mount Foraker, a 17,000 foot peak near Mount McKinley in the near-arctic of Alaska. The party consisted of the Professor and five US amateurs, without guides or porters, except for an assistant to take back the horses after the party had reached the snout of the main glacier. The mountain had not even been seen before at close quarters. The novelty of the district and the



saga of the assault - including a bivouac near the summit for six days of blizzard - greatly impressed the large audience.\*

In the next of those lectures, Tilman gave his account of the discovery by himself and Shipton of Nanda Devi on their penetrating with only three porters the Rishi Gorge, hitherto never trodden by man. And in the third of them, he described the ascent of the mountain by himself and the Americans,

Another mountaineering episode of much interest - practical as well as theoretical - in the last few years before the war was the visit of the Bavarians in the summer of 1936. Hitherto the visits of German climbers to the country were rendered impracticable by the limited currency they could take out of Germany. The way to overcome this difficulty was devised in conference at Munich between J.E.B. Wright, the famous Lakeland guide, acting for the Mountain Club of the Workers' Travel Association, and Dr. Hartmann of the DUAV. The solution was to organise an interchange of parties, the hosts in each case to pay all expenses.

The interchange began by the Bavarians coming to Britain in June 1936. The visit included their being introduced to the Welsh and Lakeland climbing grounds by ourselves and other kindred clubs, as described in the next part of this history. By a fortunate coincidence, the end of their stay found them in Manchester on the date of our July Club evening. We therefore welcomed the opportunity of entertaining sixteen of them to dinner at the Engineers' Club and to a social evening afterwards. We were cordially thanked for our hospitality in a speech by one of their senior members - Dr. Rickmer Rickmers, famous both as explorer and mountaineer. He was a friend of this country and indeed a member of the AC. He was also a friend of the Nazi government, which had recently consolidated its position by re-occupying the Rhineland in defiance of its treaty obligations. His impassioned plea for British friendship with Germany - Nazi Germany - fell uneasily on the ears of those of us who were beginning to realise what Nazi Germany meant. Later in the year, Doughty and other English climbers paid the reciprocal visit to Bavaria.

At the April Committee Meeting of 1937, a letter was read from Bennison of the London Section suggesting that they should set up their own committee to run their own affairs, hitherto limited to an annual dinner without formalities. For this purpose he interpreted "London Section" to include our residents not only in the Home Counties but also in Bedford, Berks., Buckingham, Cambridge, Hants., and Oxford. All such members would be eligible to join, on payment perhaps of a small subscription. The management of the Section was to be in the hands of a President and five members - one of whom was to act as secretary or convenor - elected at an annual meeting. They would formulate their own rules, provided of course that

*\*Wilson Hey acted as Chairman at the meeting and as host to the Professor during his visit. In fulfilling his latter duties, Hey showed him what we ourselves could provide in the way of mountains. It so happened that Kinder was in one of its worst February moods and in the course of his traverse of it the Professor somewhat ruefully admitted that he found the damp cold of a winter Kinder less tolerable than the dry cold of an Alaskan summer.*



**44. Robin Gray.**

they were to take no action which would be contrary to the rules and spirit of the Rucksack Club as a whole. The main Committee welcomed Bennison's suggestion.

Doughty, on retiring from the editorship, had strongly recommended as his successor Robin Gray, who was duly appointed at the 1934 AGM. As Robin happily is still with us, both he and I are spared any attempt by me to analyse his character except in so far as it affected his handling of the Journal. He brought to both the literary and pictorial sides of it the important editorial qualifications of sound judgment and capacity for painstaking scrutiny. His eye for a picture, combined with a knowledge - exceptional in those days among amateurs - of colour photography were displayed in his first year of office by a lecture "The Highlands in Colour" delivered at our October 1935 meeting. "It would be difficult to

describe the wonderful show of colour slides which our member Robin Gray displayed this evening" - so began the account of the evening in the Club's Minutes.

He lavished on the illustrations for the Journal the utmost care in seeking and selecting them, touching out blemishes, and "framing" them that is, marking off the exact portion to be reproduced - before sending them to the blockmaker. He took advantage of the comparative cheapness of line blocks to include more tailpieces than his predecessors had done, and headpieces to articles where apposite drawings could be obtained from members. He was fortunate here in having some fine draughtsmen amongst his contributors.

He is skilled in other pictorial media such as pen-and-ink or scraperboard work. He provided in his last issue two tailpiece pen drawings and in scraperboard, as a delectable miniature - the headpiece to E.W.Hodge's poem "The Devil's Bridge". We had to wait 15 years for his more ambitious work: the full-page winter picture of T y B which graced the Jubilee (1952) issue of the Journal.

His previous contributions to Doughty's Journals - a few short articles and a poem - had shown his quality as a writer. In sporting journals such as ours, one of the rarest kinds of contribution is a serious poem of real merit. A poem certainly of that high order is Robin's "On a Mountain Top in Assynt" (1934) in which in an evening reverie he meditates on the essential mortality of the hills, and men. The rocks are brought to dust by water, frost and wind:

..... The hills decay  
And vanish: they arise from depths  
Of ocean and to depths return.  
So dust to dust is rendered, raised  
Anew and rendered yet again  
To dust: and so they changed before  
The mind of man was conscious of  
The passing years, and still will change  
When all his dust is mixed with theirs  
And Earth a tomb.....

The poet derived consolation from the voices of the moorland birds and the other sounds of the “myriad sentient life” around him.

Robin required from his contributors a high standard of writing, and as his conscience compelled him to disclose to them all amendments - however trivial - which he thought desirable, some authors may have felt that their contributions had been knocked about more than they really had been.\*

The net result, however, is to be seen in his Journals, and such was the regard in which he and his editing were held that even those authors whose contributions had received most punishment came meekly back for more next year - so much so that his single Volume (as he pointed out in a microscopic footnote in his last issue) contained articles and illustrations from 67 different members - a surprisingly high proportion of the Club membership.

Even during Doughty’s editorial reign, Robin had commented that the thickness of each issue of the Journal had become such that the customary binding-up of them in fours was producing volumes that were too cumbrous to be conveniently handled. He put this opinion into practice by resigning at the end of his third number. He had in fact been finding that the time taken up by the Journal had become more than he could well spare, especially as his professional work as an engineer was becoming more arduous with the threat of war. His departure was viewed with dismay by those who had appreciated the fine workmanship put into each of his three issues.

Another much valued officer resigned from office at about this time. Since elected Outdoor Organiser in 1931, Alan Deane had proved himself so suited to the various tasks imposed by that office that it might have been made to measure for him - whether it was in devising new meets to fill the few gaps in the year’s programme left by the traditional ones, selecting members to lead meets, chivvying them into actually doing so, coaxing reports from them afterwards (a practice he began in 1932, in the vain hope of compiling a file of such reports for the Club

*\*A later Editor, unscrupulous enough to make up for the ability he lacked by a combination of cunning and deceit, was able to maintain both a fair literary standard and the happiness of his contributors by disclosing to each author only the alterations he would be bound to notice in proof, and effecting the others behind his back in as much as possible of the author’s own words. (Brockbank is referring to himself here - RB)*



45. Alan Deane.

Library), or himself making masterly reports to the AGMs. Those reports still make interesting reading, in spite of - perhaps because of the figures of attendances they bristle with; for Alan was a born and devoted statistician.\*

Other Outdoor Organisers have been good at such "office" parts of the job. Alan also excelled in the field work - that is, in actually turning out on meets, whether to supervise or evaluate a new one, take the place of a defaulting leader, or strengthen what looked like being a poor attendance. As he was a good climber and a strong walker, and had no objection to potholing, most meets suited him; and

till his professional studies began to encroach too much upon his time - eventually causing him to resign his office in 1938 - his record of attendances was one of the best.

A good OO also needs something of the powers of reproof possessed by a good Hut Warden - in particular to employ against such members as cancelled hotel bookings or otherwise upset arrangements at the last moment. Alan could put just the right amount of rasp into his voice for that purpose. Few officers in the Club's history have carried out all the duties of their office with more admirable - and popular - efficiency. His death in January 1977 after the foregoing lines had been written was the occasion for more than the usual one or two speakers to express impromptu at the subsequent Club Night their admiration and affection for him. One of those speakers was Ted Moss, whose obituary notice on his friend appears in the 1976 Journal.

The last months before the war were enlivened by a truculent manifesto from the Hut Committee. Its principal complaint was that it was not being consulted about Hut bookings. Whereas arrangements for allowing the Hut's use by the Wayfarers and MUMC were quite in order, the Warden had been allowing use by other clubs - in particular other university clubs - on consultation with only the main Committee or with selected members of the HC but not with the whole HC in plenary session as they alleged was ordained by the rules. In short, the HC felt ill-used. In the course of three typed foolscap pages it pointed out that when in 1927 the management of T y B was confided to it, it had possessed some power; for it could at least select one of its members to act as secretary (i.e. the Warden), subject, of course, to the approval of the main committee. Since 1931, however, the Warden

*\*In one report - I forget date and details - he gave among his figures an average yearly attendance at meets of (say) 14.2 members, thereby eliciting from the Club's humorists a query as to which member was rated at only ".2".*

had been an ex-officio member of the main Committee and so responsible for the Hut to the Club as an officer of that august body. From that time, therefore, the HC had ceased to have any power but merely existed to be consulted.

For a while, apparently, it had been consulted about Hut bookings and had had a say in them. But "in recent years" it had not. For this neglect it blamed not only the Warden of the day but also the main Committee; especial umbrage was taken at the main Committee's appointing a sub-committee to look for a new hut site, which task the HC thought should have been delegated to itself. If such neglect were continued, the HC would be "a useless ornament" and should be disbanded.

In the face of this awesome document, backed as it was by no less than three ex-Wardens and the redoubtable Dust, the main Committee kept its nerve and made soothing noises. Then "after a lengthy discussion and a very full expression of ideas" three decisions were arrived at. In brief: (a) all lettings to other clubs must be shown in the current Handbook; (b) all Hut matters should be dealt with by the Warden and Hut Committee, subject to direction by the main Committee on policy; and (c) the Committee placed "entire discretion" in the hands of the HC as regards lettings to other bodies.

With the coming of the war, my allotted part of this History ends. Though something of the Club's activities in the hills and of the way it was managed may be derived from the Journal, a close scrutiny of the Minutes reveals much background detail of interest, as I hope the above pages show. Of the impression left by the many hours of delving into the four mighty tomes which enshrine the Minutes from 1919 to 1939, the prevailing one is of sympathetic admiration, less for the skill with which the Club was apparently managed, for such information cannot readily be obtained from a study of a club's Minutes, than for the devotion directed to its management. Details abound of the care taken in discussing matters of importance or difficulty: affiliation with other clubs; selection of guests for the Dinner; applications for membership (none of which, unless hopelessly unsuitable, was turned down without most careful consideration); revision of the Club rules; attempts to purchase T y B; or the wide question of equipment and administration relating to mountain rescue. And much care and time must obviously have been devoted to the preparation of the various Reports submitted to the AGMs.

Perhaps this devotion is most clearly indicated by the attendances at the meetings of the main Committee. The Committee itself realised this; it commented on it in its Report for the year 1932, and so important was the matter considered that the paragraph was quoted in the 1933 Journal: "Eleven Committee Meetings have been held during the year, and an aggregate of 160 attendances has been recorded. The highest possible attendance per meeting is seventeen, and the average attendance has been between fourteen and fifteen. Several absentees took the trouble to send apologies. It may safely be said that very few organisations, whatever their nature, can claim to be served with equal assiduity."

That last sentence may well serve as the proud epitaph for those 21 years.

# Rockclimbing: 1919-1939

*by Eric Byrom*



*46. Tower Face, Laddow.*

At the end of the Great War the Club, like so many other institutions, had to examine itself closely and look to its future. One thing that anyone reading the Journals about that time will observe is that the Club had grown up. Prior to 1914 it was still in its early years, seeking the patronage of eminent members of the Alpine Club, almost apologetic in the tone of its articles. Only Tony Stoop and a few members who had trained under the rough tongue of Reuben Brierley could hold their own in the general world of mountaineering. Now the Club was a youthful adult, there was a feeling of confidence almost amounting to arrogance, according to its outside critics, and it could field the strongest team of rockclimbers in the country.

We had lost many good members, Claude Worthington (a pioneer of Stanage), Lehman Oppenheimer (leader of Bowfell Buttress) and George Ewen (a former Editor). But above all, Stanley Jeffcoat had been killed. In his obituary he was referred to as the perfect Rucksacker. His enthusiasm had created our first hut in Cwm Eigiau; he was with Herford on his explorations of the Central Buttress; he worked out Castle Naze (often climbing in bare feet); but principally he was a friend to every other member and the most popular man in the Club.

Two innovations helped the new rock-climbing, particularly on gritstone, to take a big step forward; the use of rubber shoes and the shoulder belay. Tennis shoes had been used by Mummery in 1881 and Burgener cast scorn on them when used on the Venetz Crack on the Grépon. Then A.W.Andrews used them extensively at the turn of the century in Cornwall. But they were not popular. Somehow they were not quite sporting and the leading tigers of their times, O.G.Jones and Siegfried Herford, preferred the discomfort of stocking feet on their harder routes. Now it was discovered that they were ideal under dry conditions for the new gritstone climbs and far less destructive to both climbers' feet and to the rock itself. The second innovation was the shoulder belay. The name of the man who first used it is shrouded in the mists of antiquity but it was certainly used at Laddow in 1915. It had a great but misplaced reputation for safety, no other attachment to the rocks was considered necessary and it says a great deal for the skill of the men using it that our journals were not full of obituaries. Finally George Bower laid bare its frailties in an article in the 1926 journal when he employed the simile of a cork popping out of a bottle and climbers began to use more modern belaying and anchoring tactics which lasted until Ken Tarbuck publicised his new technique in 1947.

The high priest of our climbing world was H.M.Kelly, a superb climber. He possessed a wonderful technique, combining a delicate balance with great determination and with an absolute passion for new routes. He normally descended every climb that he had ascended and it was inconceivable that any piece of rock would have the temerity to cast him down. Tower Face, Tower Arête and North Wall at Laddow were his routes but the great unsolved problem was the Cave Crack Direct. Kelly arrived there early one Sunday determined to lay the ghost only to find that Ivor Berg, an 18 year old Norwegian, had slept in the Cave with William Walker and had led the climb with effortless ease, not even bothering to remove his coat. Kelly attacked the crack with great vigour and succeeded at the second attempt. Berg later led the Cave Arête (then it started from the cave itself but a flake has come away which makes it impossible and it now goes up the left hand edge). He also did Leaf Buttress then returned to Norway and oblivion.

Kelly was also the second man to cut a hold on British rock. (Norman Collie on Moss Ghyll forestalled him). He cut a small nick near the start of the V-Arête and improved an existing one, thereby making it just possible. He was criticised, not for cutting the hold, but making it so small that only its creator and a few experts could do the pitch. The ground below is accommodatingly soft and is clearly impressed with the footprints of those falling from grace. Old views die hard. The natural beauties of Laddow were left severely alone for about fifteen years when Milner and Byrom cleared the Anvil face of many unpleasant overhanging sods with an ice-axe, only to be rewarded with the snide query of one of its habitués "Do you think you are improving the climb?" There is no truth in the rumour that Douglas was strangely at a loss for words and secretly visited the crag on the Monday to sow grass seeds.

Stanage and particularly High Neb were also the happy hunting grounds of Kelly and his friends. Here Berg again forestalled him by leading the magnificent



47. Kelly on The Scoop, Castle Naze.



48. Kelly at Play

High Neb Buttress, but Kelly retaliated by coming second and then leading a distinguished group of most of the active climbers present over the High Neb Girdle Traverse, which took several hours. Kelly later reversed it solo in fifteen minutes. They were enjoyable days with friendly gamekeepers who liked to sit and smoke whilst watching the crackpots at work.

Harry Kelly then declared that gritstone and particularly Laddow was worked out and he moved his great talents up to the Lake District. In a wonderful holiday in 1919 with C.F.Holland and C.G.Crawford as partners, he treated Kern Knotts as if it was a gritstone crag (it is not much higher than some) and worked out a series of very severe routes on its steep rock. More routes on Gable followed, variations on Scawfell's Pinnacle Face and several fine new ways up Pillar Rock, culminating in the hard Routes 1 and 2. These were originally christened Sodom and Gomorrah, but this was too much for the puritanically-minded guide book editors and only in our more permissive society have they reverted to their first titles. (Years later when Barber, Pigott and Byrom christened their route on Craig y Cwm Dhu "Jezebel - loose and not recommended", the horrified R.C. Editor altered it to "rock loose, care needed"). Kelly really made Pillar Rock his own mountain. He did the first Fell & Rock Guide to it and it was so excellently done that it served as a model for all succeeding guides, including those to Wales. He climbed so often on the Rock that Doughty said that wherever he placed his boots in the evening, they were automatically pointing towards Looking Stead in the morning. In later years with other teams he pioneered many fine routes throughout the Lakes. His route on Scawfell, the magnificent Moss Ghyll Grooves, was his finest. Incidentally the first reversal, as a point of honour, of M.G.G. was done by G.G.M. (G.G.Macphee) and duly celebrated by a poem in our Journal.



About the same time another member, G.S.Bower, was most active. He lived conveniently in Marsden so consequently he opened up Ravenstones, and Dovestones particularly, until he switched also to the Lakes and produced many fine climbs, including the Innominate Crack on Kern Knotts, Esk Buttress and Hiatus on Gimmer. He was a skilled engineer, at one time building submarines at Barrow, and he was the recognised expert on the mechanics of climbing and contributed several articles on the subject to various Club Journals. It was a widely held theory that height and a long reach were essential to a top class performer. George Bower possessed neither but he had a superb balance to make up for it. It was rumoured that this balance was so critical that before starting a climb he solemnly counted his loose change and distributed it equally between his pockets!



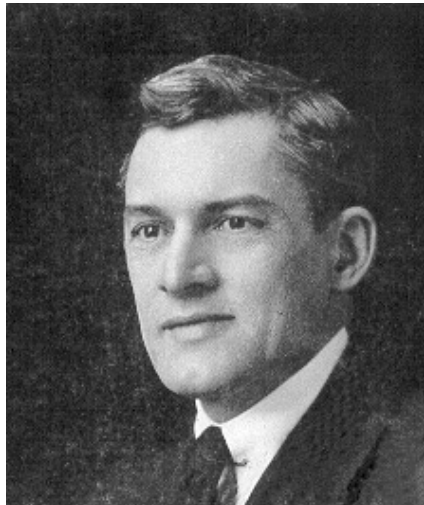
49. *George Bower on Dow Crag.*

Although Kelly believed that Laddow was worked out, others held different views and the very formidable team of A.S.Pigott and Morley Wood soon proved their point. Morley Wood had joined the Club before the war. He was a big man but surprisingly light on his feet and although a first class leader in his own right he was the perfect second, ready to support his leader by steadying his feet on small holds, giving him a physical or mental shove at the right time or to use his strength to catch him when he fell off. Fred Pigott joined in 1919. He had a somewhat shaky walking qualification and he attempted to rectify this by walking with his sponsor Percy Cookson from London - Brighton. Unfortunately each failed to inform the other that he did not possess the fare home and a veil must be drawn over the return of the precious pair. Climbers up to now had tended to be strong, silent men who brought a certain grimness to their craft. Fred's light-hearted, well-mannered nonchalance, often with a cigarette in his mouth, hid a most determined character. Supported by his F.H. (Faithful Hound as Morley was known) he was invariably successful. John Wilding, himself no mean performer, took him to Scotland and they made new routes in Glencoe, the Comb, Douglas Boulder and the Direct ascent of the Great Tower on the Ben, then on to Skye with a new direct finish to the Crack of Doom and a steep crack on the Inaccessible Pinnacle. Later with Morley Wood, Pigott led the Central Buttress of Coire Mhic Fhearchair, George Bower having already done the Western Buttress. The Inseparables, as they were known, sampled the routes on gritstone which Kelly had found and enjoyed them.

They visited Laddow often, added Priscilla (once thought to be the hardest climb on gritstone) Little Crowberry and a new Girdle Traverse. On Black Rocks they did Sand Buttress with its hard finishing move, Lone Tree Gully and Lean Man's Climb, on Cratcliffe Tor the Bower and the Giant's Staircase and Pigott hand-traversed from the Bower to Owl Gully, a route which does not appear in the guide books. But their greatest discovery was the Roches, a quarter mile length of high, perfect gritstone, containing only two old routes. They did several climbs on the Great Slab, Black & Tan Climb, and the very severe Crack & Corner Climb. Until the secret hold was discovered, a shoulder was deemed necessary on the overhanging last pitch. Pigott also led Batchelor's Buttress, but Morley Wood said it was misnamed as it should only be done by married men who are used to taking risks. It was probably when they were doing this climb that the land owner, Sir Phillip Brocklehurst, appeared and enquired loudly and brusquely what they were doing on his property. He was firmly requested by Birtenshaw to be quiet until the leader had done his difficult move.

Fergus Graham appeared frequently at Laddow. He was a regular army officer and consequently his periods of leave did not correspond with those of ordinary mortals and he often had to climb alone, doing solo routes on Gable and the Teryn Slabs. He was responsible for Smithy and Omicron Buttress at Laddow but his finest routes were Moss Ledge Direct on the Pinnacle Face and Javelin Buttress above the Idwal Slabs. As their headquarters he and other Laddow climbers used the George and Dragon at Crowden, rechristened the Rope and Rubbers. Finally it was demolished by the Manchester Corporation in the sacred cause of the purity of their drinking water.

Stanage Edge, all three miles of it, was also very popular and the presiding genius there was Rice K. Evans, the U.S. Vice-Consul at Sheffield, a strongly-built man with a great reach. Manhattan and Doctors Chimney on Stanage End were named after him and he encouraged Cyril Ward to lead the very severe Inverted-V, although this had formerly been done on a top-rope, unlike most gritstone climbs. Eventually the American authorities realised that climbing on Stanage was more important than consular duties and he returned to the States. Evening climbing was popular during the week and Laurence Travis, Ward and others climbed all over the various edges between Stanage and Chatsworth, but because of the extensive keeping it was considered not politic to advertise the fact and no records were kept. Pigott and Wood spent their evenings on Bosley Cloud and the Cat Rock there provided them with several routes.



50. *Rice Evans.*

So far the only guide to gritstone climbing had been "Some Gritstone Climbs" written by John Laycock in 1913. This admirable book was now completely out-of-date so our Club, with assistance from the Yorkshire Ramblers and the Gritstone Clubs, produced a sequel to it in 1924 entitled "Recent Developments on Gritstone", edited by Fergus Graham who also wrote the Laddow chapter. Other contributors included Pigott on Black Rocks and Cratcliffe, Bower on Ravenstones, Wood on the Roches and Evans on Stanage. The introduction was by John Laycock himself, showing a fine Christian spirit of forgiveness, for he had originally fallen out with our Club when the Committee had foolishly refused to back "Some Gritstone Climbs", in case it prejudiced the privileges they received from Peak District land owners. The book was admirably illustrated by Firth Burton.



*51. Pigott's Climb.*

The centre of rock-climbing was now moving to greater cliffs. Fred Pigott, Morley Wood and Bernard Meldrum made the third ascent of Central Buttress on Scawfell, the hardest climb in the country. In 1925 the Club held its Easter Meet in Buttermere and an unknown crag was opened up by Pigott with his Western Buttress and Graham with his Easter Buttress in Birkness Combe.

But the tigers of the Club were after sterner stuff. In the 1920 Journal H.R.C.Carr reported on the awe-inspiring Eastern and Western Buttress of Clogwyn dur Arddu, the highest, grimmest and steepest precipice in England or Wales. Carr hazarded a guess that only an expert in perfect training would have the slightest chance of success. The 1926 Easter Meet was held at Beddgelert and an inspection of the great cliff was made by various interested persons. The following year a party led by Fred Pigott attacked the Eastern Buttress at its most obvious line of weakness. The first real obstacle was the short, steep corner. This was climbed with the help of a good handhold found by raising a grass sod. Above this was a ledge with a small flake and a belay was manufactured by jamming behind it Mrs.Pigott's broom handle (this was still there ten years later). Pigott slid down the corner as last man and was duly fielded by his burly second, standing on an exposed ledge. A further attempt lead to the penultimate pitch, which was a steep, holdless crack. Here Wood hatched his famous diabolical plot; he searched the

scree for stones of a suitable diameter to jam in the crack. With Pigott ill in bed, a further attempt was made by Wood and Lindley Henshaw. Wood climbed as far as he could, inserted a chock and tied himself to it. Henshaw climbed on his shoulders and tied himself to a second inserted stone. Wood's chockstone then came out and deposited him on the starting ledge, leaving Henshaw stranded quite a long way up the crack. Pigott's view was that if any pebbles had stuck in the crack, it was due to Providence and not to any skill on Wood's part. But the news worked a marvellous cure on the invalid. In a few days a final assault was made and Pigott led the crack at the first attempt and finished the climb, supported by Wood, Henshaw and Firth Burton. The latter had come along to photograph the goings-on but was so excited that he forgot to wind on the film at the crux.

The following year an attempt was made on the Western Buttress. Much gardening was necessary and another of Wood's infamous chockstones was inserted. They found that a Cambridge party were also making an attempt so the two parties combined and Jack Longland, Fred Pigott, Frank Smythe, Bill Eversden and Morley Wood completed Longland's climb. Not only was Wood's stone used, but a piton also at the crux, the first, but by no means the last to be inserted in Welsh rock. It was a very prestigious party. The Establishment bore the shock manfully and mutely and did not make the fuss that it did in 1936 when the second spike was stuck in Tryfaen. Colin Kirkus of the Climbers Club then dominated the Cloggy scene but he was supported by Alf Bridge and Maurice Linnell on Curving Crack (Linnell led the first pitch with a terrific layback), Graham Macphee was second on the Great Slab and Kirkus led Pigott, Wood and Bridge on his Direct Finish to the Eastern Buttress. Finally Maurice Linnell, Eddie Holliday, Fred Pigott, and Leslie Roberts climbed the hardest route yet done in Wales, the Narrow Slab on the Western Buttress, a supreme effort by Linnell and including an awkward sideways jump from a small grass tuft and finally only made possible by the forked tail which Pigott distinctly saw emerge from the leader's trousers and push him upwards.

Maurice Linnell was now our leading climber. A product of the MUMC, he was the driving force in the formative years of that Club, being its Treasurer and then its Secretary. He was a fanatical climber, toughening himself by placing his hands in an ice-box at the University and doing difficult gritstone climbs complete with a heavy rucksack and an ice-axe. He led Alf Bridge and A.B.Hargreaves on the first Girdle Traverse of Pillar Rock but his best efforts were reserved for the East Buttress of Scawfell, the Lakes' answer to the severities of Cloggy. There was only one route on the main cliff, Kirkus's Mickledore Grooves. Linnell started near the lowest part with Syd Cross and completed the Great Eastern Route. Then came the Overhanging Wall with A.T.Hargreaves. On this Linnell inserted a piton. In his own words "Not only was it put there as a safeguard; by pulling on it sideways, downwards, outwards and upwards and finally placing a foot on it, I was able to reach a little ledge. I offer no apologies; those who prefer to climb the place unaided are cordially invited to remove the piton and do so." There were no offers. Again with A.T.Hargreaves he did the Morning Wall Climb, this time inserting a small pebble as a belay. The White Slab was a variant of this latter climb and finally

he did the Yellow Slab Variant of the Great Eastern Route, probably the hardest route yet done in the Lakes. He could be difficult at times and once, after an argument with his team, soloed Botterill's Slab, then across the two traverses of Central Buttress and made the first ascent of the Bayonet-shaped Crack on that climb. He was killed on Ben Nevis in 1934 when a snow-step broke away on the Castle on Ben Nevis, bringing down both Linnell and his partner Colin Kirkus. Linnell was killed outright but Kirkus, though badly injured, completed the route by a magnificent tour-de-force and sought assistance. Less than a year before Morley Wood had passed away and with the death of J.H.Doughty, greatest of Editors and After Dinner Speakers, in 1936, the Club suffered a triple blow from which it did not recover for some time.

The Club had suffered another tragedy in 1928 when its former President, Edgar Pryor was accidentally knocked off the ledge below the third pitch of the Laddow Long Climb, suffering severe head and leg injuries. In those days there were, of course, no Rescue Posts and transporting him down to Crowden using inefficient equipment worsened these injuries. Despite immediate attention at the rocks by T.C.Findlay, a Police Surgeon, and the devoted care of Wilson Hey, one of the country's leading surgeons, it was finally necessary to amputate his leg. The Club had a whip round and bought him a car, but he was rarely seen at our meetings. However, in 1975 when his widow died, it was found that he had left £25 to the Club in his will, a precedent which other members might consider following. Pigott, Hey and others



52. Edgar Pryor.

realised how important it was to improve mountain rescue and a joint committee was set up with the F.&R.C.C. (their representatives C.P.Lapage and L.H.Pollitt, were also members of our Club) Eustace Thomas, a constructional engineer, designed a special stretcher for us in mountainous country and the Thomas stretcher is still in use today. Mountain Rescue posts were established near most big climbing centres and were fully equipped with stretchers and rucksacks containing first aid gear, including morphia, which was, strictly speaking, illegal. Nearly 50 years later the Mountain Rescue Committee is still mainly run by our members, with assistance and funds from many other Clubs. It has saved countless lives and when the history of mountaineering is written in 100 years time, it will serve as the Rucksack Club's greatest gift to the sport.

Laddow was also in the news in a pleasanter way. Hey had used his great influence to form the Manchester University Mountaineering Club and it had already produced three first class rockclimbers (to say nothing of Linnell) who came under the influence of the Rev.A.E.Chisman. Arthur Chisman might have been a good clergyman on Sundays but his flock would hardly have recognised him on certain weekdays on the rocks complete with the cricket cap which he sported. His three proteges were H.K.Hartley, A.T.Hargreaves and R.S.Horsman, perhaps the most powerful team yet seen on gritstone. They soon proved Kelly and Pigott to be mistaken when they had declared Laddow to be worked out. On that long-suffering crag they added Little Innominate, Terrace Wall and Blacksmith, made the first descent of Priscilla and Hartley led a new Girdle Traverse, following the line of greatest resistance. As it started with Cave Crack Direct, nothing further need be said. At Stanage they added the superb Black Slab, led by Hargreaves, Christmas Crack, Rusty Wall, Mississippi Buttress and many others. But their happiest discovery was an entirely new crag which they called Mystery Buttress and eluded other tigers in the Club who might have pinched it from them. It was, of course, Widdop and its class might be judged some 24 years later when Allen Allsopp, the local expert, was asked how he had enjoyed the Mer de Glace Face of the Grépon "Very nice, almost as good as Widdop", and he meant a high compliment to the hapless aiguille. At the same time Alf Bridge was very active in the Peak District and his contributions included two routes on Kinder, Fairbrook Buttress and Pavlova. This latter route was so named by Alf because he claimed to have shared a first-class compartment with the great Russian dancer on a trip up to London. And then Laddow really seemed to be worked out until 1938 when Arthur Birtwistle did his Priscilla Ridge, Arthur Mullen and Alec Ferguson the Twin Eliminate in 1940 and Travis, Pigott, Byrom and Lomas two lesser routes about the same time.

The centre of the Club's activities now seemed to move to Wales. This was probably due to our acquisition of Tal y Braich in the Ogwen Valley. Fred Heardman was the first warden and a very efficient job he made of it. Eustace Thomas designed the water system and although starting it at the commencement of a weekend involved plunging the arm up to the elbow in icy water, it usually worked. From this hut many fine climbs were done. Perhaps the most active pair was P.L.Roberts and J.K.Cooke. They were the first to do all the known climbs on Clogwyn dur Arddu and they worked out Main Wall in Cynr Las, which compared well with those on the Black Cliff and is now one of the most popular climbs in the country. They also did many climbs on Clogwyn y Ddysgl and elsewhere, but unfortunately Jake Cooke was killed at Dunkerque in the second war.

Meanwhile, up to the Highlands, members had not merely been bagging Munros, although this was a popular pursuit. In 1922 John Wilding was besides the Toll an Lochan under the main cliff of An Teallach and he climbed it under wintry conditions to the summit of Corrag Bhuide, 1400 feet higher, a fine solo effort which is rarely repeated today by roped parties. A few years later, by mistake perhaps, he made a sensational descent of the northern cliffs of Suilven. In 1928 Basil Goodfellow was the first to do the Skye Ridge traverse from South to North.

Then in 1935 Robin Gray slept out in the heather below Suilven and the following day made the first ascent of the main cliff of Caistal Liath by a fine rock route. On Ben Nevis Graham Macphee was officially engaged in writing a new guide to the North face, but as with Kelly on Pillar, it seemed that the supply of new routes that he was doing would extend the production of the guide indefinitely. His party, led by A.T.Hargreaves, and accompanied by H.V.Hughes, climbed Route 1 on Cam Dearg, Hadrian's Wall and the delicate Rubicon Wall. As he lived 330 miles away from the Ben and found time to accompany A.B.Reynolds on Gimmer Crack, besides doing his own route Joas, it was not surprising that the guide did not appear until 1936.

Soon the Scottish climbers began to resent these border forays from the Sassenachs. There had recently been a great revival amongst the J.M.C.S. and men like Bill Murray, Ken Dunn, McKenzie and MacAlpine were laying secret plans to recover the initiative in their own mountains. Unfortunately one of their members was given a lift from Fort William in Bernard Nelstrop's car, accompanied by Ken Barber, most ambitious of our climbers. Little did he realise the nest of vipers he had stumbled into as he passed the journey by expounding into the flapping ears of Barber the names of mysterious crags on which they had designs. In 1938, the Easter Meet was held in Arran which, in those days, was regarded more for its excellent ridge walks and only possessed a small number of climbs. Barber led Pigott up the Easter Route on the Rosa Pinnacle and Coxon, Bower and Pigott made a new route on the virgin Cioch na L'Oighe. These strong parties then made a determined effort to do the second ascent of the notorious Ben Nuis Chimney, first climbed by Baker, Oppenheimer and Puttrel in 1901. Despite standing on each others' heads for several hours they barely left the ground and it only fell to a still more determined effort by a Scottish team equipped with the ironware fashionable in 1955. Of such stuff were our pioneers made! Frank Solari and Jim Irens opened up Strone Ulladale, to be the scene of incredible ascents on its overhanging nose by Doug Scott and others in recent years. The following year, Ken Barber with John Jenkins and Michael Taylor\* made the second ascent of the Clachaig Gully and with Jim Lomas as chauffeur and a doughty second he made a 600 foot route on the North face of Garbh Bheinn of Ardgour and a 1,200 foot climb on the adjacent North-Eastern Buttress. The approaching war certainly stopped further trespassing on these preserves.



53 John Jenkins.

*\*This and subsequent reference are to Michael S. Taylor, not to be confused with Michael H. Taylor, a London member who did not join the Club until 1990. -RB*

Ken Barber and Eric Byrom were probably the most active pair during the late thirties. They did several routes on Cloggy, Central Buttress on Scawfell and many classic climbs, never missing a weekend, whatever the weather, which in those days seemed to be much better. They added their own routes on Llechog, Cwm Silin, also on Dearn and Ghreadaidh on Skye. Douglas Milner was frequently seen, and even heard, in the mountains. Douglas, of course, has since acquired such a reputation as a photographer, lecturer, the author of fine books on Mountain Photography, Chamonix and the Dolomites, that we must not overlook that he was an experienced and intrepid climber with many classic routes including C.B. to his credit. However, his written opinion that "Derbyshire is damp, dirty and miserable. Its climbing is either inferior or impossible. The walking is a purgatory of easy monotony etc." shattered the nerve of the 1952 Editor of the Journal in no uncertain way. Somehow we feel that the Milner tongue was firmly in its cheek and it was revenge for the description of "the mute inglorious Poucher" by that Editor in another number. Another active group was originally from Birmingham University led by John Jenkins, a genial giant who must have been a reincarnation of Stanley Jeffcoat. He was surely the most enthusiastic and voluble mountaineer who ever lived and was justly loved by everyone. With Michael Taylor, a fine mountaineer on both rock and ice, he found the Skyline Route on Glyder Fach and the Jubilee Climb on the Far Eastern Buttress of Cloggy. Burly Jim Irens, 18 stone of solid bone and muscle, (he played for the R.A.F. at Rugby) Laurence Travis, Frank Solari, Richard Barry, Barber and Byrom frequently joined his parties at Tal y Braich or camping. They were happy days, with long evenings recounting incredible (and often rude) stories, plenty of beer, no climbers apparently reading the newspapers or taking the faintest interest in politics, the dreadful threat of war being completely ignored. When a party of crack German climbers from the Sektion Bayerland of the D.O.A.V. arrived (the elite club of Germany) Jenkins and Priestley Phillips acted as their guides and mentors in North Wales. After making light work of Holly Tree Wall, they were taken round to Cloggy. Despite pouring rain and a thunderstorm and with klettershoes slipping on the greasy rocks, four parties did Longlands, although they were impressed. Two days later Jenkins remembered an old idea to do a route of the wall of South Gully on Tryfaen. Hans Teufel led the six pitches in rain but used two pitons. It was christened Munich Climb and all hell broke out! The thought that foreigners had dared to stick their dreadful spikes into the sacred rock of Tryfaen was too much for the Establishment and three days later J.M.Edwards and Wilfred Noyce repeated the climb and removed the offending ironware. A few days later the Bavarians (minus Jenkins) visited the Lakes and Teufel led C.B. in pouring rain, doing the Flake Crack direct without assistance. Later Stoepler led the Gimmer Crack in similar weather carrying an open umbrella.

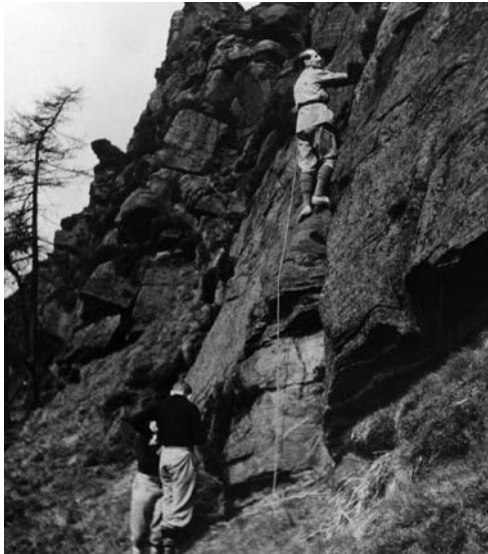
The war was now approaching rapidly but one more figure appeared, Arthur Birtwistle, yet another product of the MUMC and a worthy descendant of Linnell. His contribution was the Diagonal Route on Dinas Mot, a very thin, technically difficult slab climb and with such a reputation that it was not repeated for ten years by John Lawton. It is still holding its own amongst the climbs of today.



With the outbreak of the war, climbing was necessarily curtailed and shortage of petrol made car trips impossible. A cycling section was started and the joys of gritstone climbing were re-discovered. In particular, Pigott, Burton, Coxon, Bower, Byrom and others found that the Roches, closed by the Brocklehursts for many years could be revisited by a judicious flannelling of the keeper and all the old classic climbs there were enjoyed again. Weekends were spent at Tunstead House and the caves at Stanage used for dormitories. We lost members in the Forces but we made one very important gain when a chance meeting brought Alec Ferguson, Secretary of the Rockclimbing Section of the Y.M.C.A., into the Club. He was a most determined and dedicated climber of a high standard and his great influence turned the Y.M.C.A. into our most prolific breeding ground, producing Ted Courtenay, Joe Walmsley and Dave Briggs, who subsequently climbed in the Himalayas as well as many more excellent members.

But the end of the war had to come someday and with it there came many exciting new developments undreamed of by the climbers of yesterday. Round the corner lurked the formidable figures of Joe Brown and Don Whillans, greatest of the newcomers and able to produce new standards of difficulty which were entirely to alter the face of our sport and to enable our young men to hold their own with honour amongst the greatest of the foreigners.

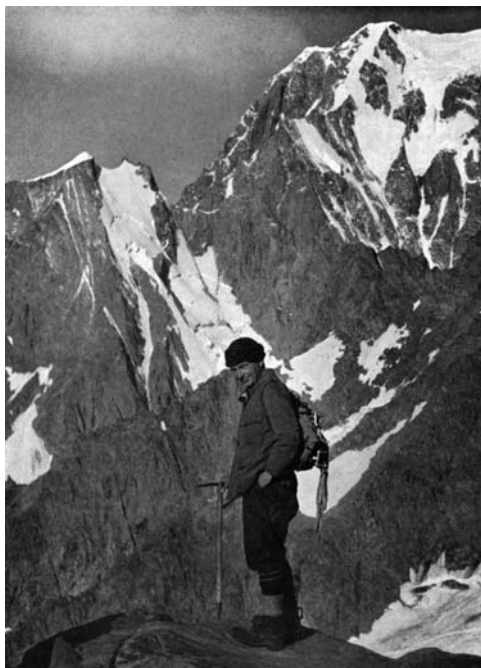
These notes usually refer to first or important ascents made by some of the prominent members of our Club. Many worthy names have been omitted through shortage of space and we hope that they will understand and accept our apologies. By the very nature of our application form most members will have had a good deal of experience of rockclimbing and these unsung heroes are often very active. They form the real backbone of the Club, their conduct on mountains gives the Club its standing and it could not carry on without them.



*54. Fred Pigott at The Roches.*

## Climbing abroad: 1919-1939

*by Eric Byrom*



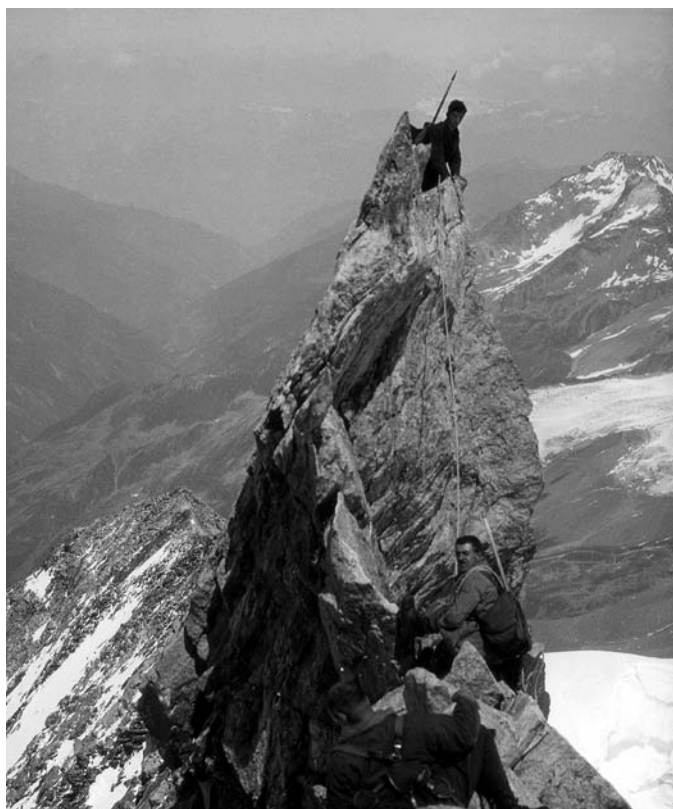
*55. George Bower in the Alps.*

At the end of the Great War travel, of course, was very difficult owing to the state of the French Railways. But the Swiss and the French, it seems incredible now, badly wanted our pounds (both francs stood at twenty-five to the £) and by 1920 things were returning to normal. A third-class ticket (there were no fourths) to Chamonix, sitting on hard wooden seats for twenty four hours, cost about £7 from London and soon several members of the Club were visiting the Alps again. The first on the scene apparently was Edgar Pryor who went to the Dauphiné with O'Malley and Newton and after training on the Southern Aiguille D'Arve, which once frightened off Whymper, they traversed the Meije, which in those days had a high reputation as one of the outstanding routes in the Alps. As happens to all the best people, they lost themselves on the descent and spent the night under a boulder. Pryor was a fine all-round mountaineer, but he was a climber, pure and simple. He loathed walking (the Lord only knew how he filled in his application form) but until his unlucky accident at Laddow he climbed every year in the Alps. Perhaps his best route was the Zmutt Ridge.

George Bower soon followed him. Using the same technique and determination which had brought him so many new routes in the Lakes, he specialised on the

Aiguilles (although he climbed elsewhere). During eighteen visits to Chamonix he climbed everything but the Caiman, which is only done by traversing the Plan and Crocodile, and which seemed to have the faculty of moving smartly away whenever the clutching Bower hand moved in its direction. He was the first Englishman to be elected to the G.H.M., the crack French Club. Douglas Milner pretended that he was a mine of misleading and inaccurate information. Anyway, with Bernard Meldrum, Howard Somervell and Bentley Beetham, (these last two were shortly to be in the Everest team) this strong party climbed the Charmoz before moving on for the Matterhorn and the Dent Blanche at Zermatt. The following year the same party, plus G.A.Solly, of Eagle's Nest Direct fame, returned to Chamonix and Bower twice led the Grépon

However, 1923 was to be Bower's big season. His party, which included Edgar Pryor, Fred Pigott and Morley Wood, traversed Mont Blanc from the Torino Hut, crossing Mont Maudit and Mont Blanc de Tacul, in 14 hours, perhaps the most murderous training climb in the Alps; it either killed or cured! Pryor then had to go home but Bower's eye was firmly fixed on a V-notch to the left of the Grépon skyline. It was the Col de Nantillons and one of the few routes which had repulsed Winthrop Young and Josef Knubel in 1909, despite some hectic knobelling by the



*56. Le Rasoir, Zinal Rothorn.*

St. Nicholas guide. The route was brilliantly led by Bower, although Wood deserved much credit for doing the whole climb carrying two rucksacks, two axes and crampons and 200 feet of spare line. The other two were very relieved when he did not fall off a particularly thin traverse as they could never have hauled him up and it would have meant descending the crevassed Nantillons Glacier two on a rope! Fortunately Wood rose to the occasion and gave them no problem. Only later did they find out that they had been forestalled for the first ascent by the Lépiney brothers two years previously.

Wood then had to leave but Bower and Pigott planned to make the first guideless ascent of the famous Mer de Glace Face of the Grépon, Winthrop Young's greatest classic and so well described in his book "On High Hills". The pair departed early in the morning from the Montenvers (the hut on the Red Tower had not yet been built) and made for the Trélaporte Gap. To save weight they did not take crampons or their usual ice-axes but used toy axes usually carried by tourists. In spite of this they made short work of the steep glacier approach and launched themselves on the rocks. Eleven and a half hours after leaving the hotel they reached the final tower. It was snowing gently and they were faced with the ferocious final overhanging crack on which Knubel had jammed his axe on the first ascent and used it as a horizontal bar. Bower tried hard and failed and invited Pigott to have a go. He stuck at the final chockstone but his words are famous "the heads of a belated party appeared six feet above. "voulez-vous la corde, monsieur?" and a rope end brushed the end of his nose. His glance strayed from the scandalised eyes of the manager to the depths below. "Er, s'il vous plaît" he answered in his best French and in a few seconds was on top of the Grépon." As he said, "Eighteen months later, George spoke to me again". This last six feet rankled with Bower and a few years later he climbed the Grépon by the easier C.P. route with F.S.Smythe. He treated the Knubel Crack like a gritstone problem, took off his coat, donned rubbers and climbed the crack using two extreme layback movements. Previously he had also led the Venetz Crack, originally climbed by mistake by Mummery's guide on the first ascent.

The Club's activities in the Alps during the next decade were dominated by two men who between them represented the nearest approach to human perpetual motion yet seen in mountaineering, Eustace Thomas and Firth Burton. Eustace, a highly-gifted engineer, had adopted a special system of training before his holidays. Briefly, he played tennis vigorously, wearing several thick sweaters, and thus got rid of all superfluous matter in the form of sweat, weakening himself in the progress, like professional jockeys do. Then in the last few days, he built himself up by eating underdone steaks and other concentrated foods. It seemed to work with him but would have been disastrous with a lesser mortal. He had climbed in the Alps before the war but it was not until 1924, at the age of 50, that he decided that he would climb every peak over 4,000 metres, with his famous guide, Josef Knubel. There were 83 of them and he finished the lot by 1928; in his spare time he did an extra 30 peaks like the Grépon and Mummery which were worth doing but did not have the necessary altitude. He was the first Britisher to do this and probably no other has done it since. (Brian Cosby describes his own

progress towards this goal in RCJ 1973 "A Waiting Game"). He had the advantage of not being short of either time or money and in bad weather would return home and await a cable from Knubel to tell him that things had improved. As well as Knubel he usually employed a local guide from the district he happened to be in, but this was wearing work as several well-known professionals found out. In fact, one of them threatened to sue him in the courts, on the grounds that his physical condition had been permanently impaired. Eustace was the hardest goer of the Alpine Brotherhood. Although he carried a camera, and sometimes a cine camera, it was hard to imagine him stopping to admire a particular view. Finally only various peaks on the great southern ridges of Mont Blanc remained, such as the Pic Luigi

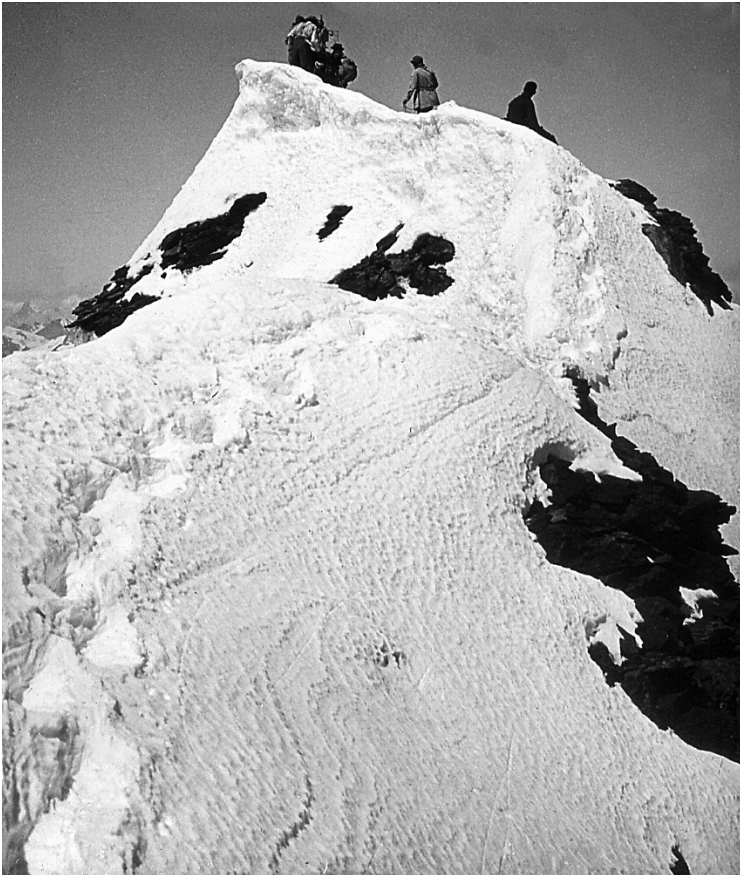


57. *Thomas and Guides.*

Amedeo on the Brouilliard Arête, and in a glorious thirteen days he climbed the Peuterey Ridge and the Brouilliard Arête and made the first descent of the Innominata Ridge, a wonderful effort by our most distinguished Alpine climber. He gave Josef Knubel (at the guide's suggestion) a gold watch.

But he could not rest on his laurels. More 4,000 metre peaks were put on the list, namely the Aiguilles du Diable, first traversed by the greatest French guide, Armand Charlet, accompanied by Georges Cachat, Robert Underhill and Miriam O'Brien. So, in his sixtieth year, Eustace again took up his ice-axe. Knubel was not available, but he was introduced by Wilson Hey to Alexander Taugwalder, a young Zermatt guide of great promise, and a brilliant performer on rock. With Cachat as second guide, the party traversed the five Diables, Taugwalder leading the hardest, the Isolee, with the help of his jammed axe. Nowadays pitons make the difficult move safer. (Later Wilson Hey, with Hilda Summersgill, and with Taugwalder again as guide, did most of the traverse but had to omit the Isolee because of iced rocks.) Two days later Thomas and his guides did the Aiguilles Mummery and Ravel, followed by the Mer de Glace Face of the Grépon and the Dunod Chimney. There was still a week left of the holiday, so Eustace and Taugwalder went to the Dolomites. Firth Burton had drawn up for them a weeks programme, but this was completed in four days only, the traverse of the Vajolet Towers being done in under two and a half hours.

Taugwalder was first discovered by our members, R.A. Eastwood and Wilson Hey. He led Hey up the Younggrat on Breithorn. The modern ice piton still had to be invented and Taugwalder carried a hand-drill with which he bored holes in the ice, inserting wooden pegs as belays. On return to Zermatt he was confronted by Knubel (the guide on the first ascent) and told that he could not have done the route as no Zermatt guide was good enough to do it. History repeated itself; in 1865 when they made the first ascent of the Aiguille Verte, Almer and Biner were similarly attacked by the Chamonix guides. Hey responded as Whymper did and roundly defended his guide from attack. Alexander climbed with many Rucksackers and came to England with Hey. He wished to climb England's highest mountain and did so via Botterill's Slab, which Pigott persuaded him was the usual way up! Although a professional, he also climbed for pleasure and with his cousin Karl Biner, also a guide, he did the second ascent of the South Face of the Täschhorn, made famous in "On High Hills", and an early ascent of the Furggen Ridge of the Matterhorn. He was killed in 1952, attempting to make the first descent of the East Face of Monte Rosa.



*58. Matterhorn Summit.*

After Eustace Thomas, the Club's most prolific and nonstop Alpinist was Firth Burton. Tall, long-legged, determined and inexhaustible, he had twenty-five trips to the Alps, usually with hand-picked parties of the toughest members of the Club. To be invited to join the Burton Circus was an honour coveted by everyone, but the lucky ones usually had doubts about the wisdom of accepting before the holiday was over. The trips lasted three weeks and were arranged down to the last detail. Programmes were drawn up of the peaks to be climbed and they were carried out, come hell or high water. Occasionally members would be amazed to find that they had been granted an off-day, but this was not an excuse for slinking off to the nearest patisserie. The opportunity would be taken to take the gear over a couple of high passes to a new centre several valleys away. Strange to say, only one man failed to stand the pace and he was a non-member. Although much guideless work was carried out, usually one guide was engaged for the party, Alexander Taugwalder in Switzerland and Johann Demetz in the Dolomites. Perhaps the 1926 ascent of the Matterhorn was a typical example of the goings-on. The party included A.E. Burns, Founder and Secretary of the Club, who dearly wanted to climb the great peak. But the weather was bad for the last two days, so the party climbed the Mettelhorn, technically easy but 6,000 feet above Zermatt. At the Trift Hut, on the way down, they met a party who reported that the cloud level was low but conditions were not too bad aloft. A ghastly mistake had been made and there was only one day to rectify it. The party rushed down to Zermatt, bought fresh provisions and at 9 p.m. in moonlight, left for the Hörnli Hut which was reached at 1.30 a.m. They rested for two hours and then left for the Matterhorn which they climbed, finally returning to their hotel at 11 p.m. to catch the early train home next morning. Burns had his cherished wish and it must have been a great effort with his short legs. Another big outing at the end of the holiday was a traverse of the Königspitze, Zebbru and Ortler, three members being benighted at 10,000 feet, just above the hut. The mainstay of most parties was Bill Humphreys, a herculean figure who loyally supported the manager in all his eccentricities and always carried double his share of the communal food. He had the engaging habit of developing a strained leg if anyone was lagging so that he could stop back with the slowcoach. Then in 1935 Brock the Badger



59. *Jenkins and Taylor.*

appeared, a gaunt figure with towel round its neck and clips on its nose, which even Firth found it difficult to keep up with. In only one way could the parties get a genuine respite. Firth was an enthusiastic and very capable photographer and every detail of the holiday had to be recorded.

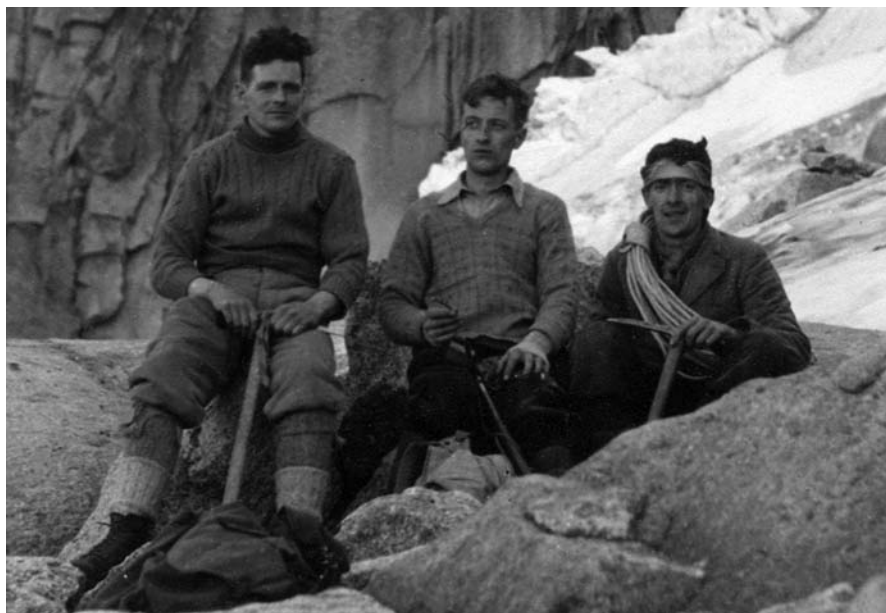
The mid-thirties were dominated by the John Jenkins-Michael Taylor team and their various friends. John was a muscular young giant, possessing a boisterous but friendly personality that won him popularity throughout the climbing world. He had great drive and

mountaincraft, was an avid reader of mountain literature and always striving for quality in his chosen routes. He was first taken to the Alps as a boy of sixteen by Laurence Travis, a first-class teacher and all rounder. Later he teamed up with Michael Taylor, quieter, steady, a fine technician on rock and the best ice-man in the Club. Led by Richard Barry they did the East Face of the Grépon, Barry leading the Knubel Crack at the first attempt. Other climbs were the Crestone Rey of Monte Rosa, the Guggi and Silberhorn Routes on the Jungfrau, and the Frontier Ridge of Mont Maudit, accompanied by George Bower who was very impressed by Taylor's ice-work. It was on this route that Mallory uttered his famous words "What have we conquered? Naught but ourselves" which just about sums up the whole philosophy of climbing. With Milner, Jenkins did the Bower-Morin Route on the Requin. As Douglas said, "Neither was exactly a trappist monk and the conversation fairly sizzled up and down the rope. Occasionally they even found themselves discussing the same subject!" In 1937 Jenkins and Taylor went to the Caucasus with a Cambridge party. Tetnuld and Ushba were climbed although illness prevented John from doing the latter peak. Back home he lectured to the Alpine Club and claimed a new record, that he was the first to mention sex to that august body. Now that sex is bi-sexual the A.C. must be prepared to admit that it really does exist. He was killed in 1947 caused by a slip on steep snow when descending the Old Brenva Route. Richard Barry descended the Innominata Ridge and climbed the Peuterey Ridge in three days with Armand Charlet. Then he went to South Africa where he made a great impression on the Mountain Club members, re-vitalising the climbing there. He was killed when attempting the first ascent of the Monk's Cowl in the Drakensberg. He was followed to South Africa by another member, Michael Burton, who was just as successful, his new routes including the Monk's Cowl.



60. Tetnuld N.Face.





61. *Nelstrop, Chadwick and Byrom.*

Certainly the most travelled of our members was Basil Goodfellow who climbed everywhere. He was a distinguished member of the Alpine Club, its Secretary for years, later President of our Club and twice of the British Mountaineering Council. He often climbed with T. Graham Brown, the foremost expert on Mont Blanc (later a member of our Club) famous for his three great new routes on the South Face. Basil had at least one very narrow escape in 1926. He injured his leg when attempting to ski up Mont Blanc and, as a result of this handicap, missed the last train up to Montnvers. The train got out of control through brake failure and every passenger in one coach was killed in a dreadful crash. Basil was the private secretary to one of the heads of I.C.I. and went with that worthy on a world tour of the firm's overseas interests. It was only when he returned that he realised that the tour had been skillfully planned by Basil to enable him to climb on all five continents!

Other active parties in the Alps were Eddie Holliday and Arthur Burns Junior at Chamonix, Eric Byrom and Bernard Nelstrop at Zermatt, Chamonix and Grindelwald, John Hirst Senior who led several club parties and Priestley Phillips in the Tatra several times. Far afield there was Bill Eversden on Lhonak Peak, Radford in Greenland, Wootton in East Africa, whilst Harry Kelly went to Russia. The story of the effect of his lordly presence on that troubled country remains in the mists of silence.

The most ambitious expedition, however, was to Lofoten, off the North coast of Arctic Norway, organised by Harry Spilsbury. E.W.Steeple, better known as the Skye pioneer, went there in 1924 and was very impressed, but in spite of that it attracted little attention until Spilsbury took two Wayfarers parties and in 1937 one

from the Rucksack Club. The active climbers were Harry himself, Alan Deane and Priestley Phillips, supported by the two veterans Bill Humphry and Arthur Burns Senior. They found an area of magnificent gabbro peaks, Skye on a big scale, which had hardly been touched by English parties and they climbed the best of them, Stedtind and Strandaartind as well as several other peaks. On Strandaartind the two veterans accompanied the party for the first half until an obvious place of descent was noticed down which they started. They were late for dinner and told hair-raising stories of their descent down great boiler-plated slabs. This was taken with a pinch of salt and only months later was it discovered that their line of descent had defeated the original pioneers of the peak. There was no holding the old gentlemen after that.

As with the rock-climbing report, it must be stated that these notes only cover a part of the Club's activities abroad. Many members were going to the Alps and elsewhere and many excellent routes were done by them. Once more we must apologise for omitting them but also to remind them that to earn a reputation as a great climber it is not only necessary to climb many fine peaks. It is also necessary to write in Club Journals about them, or preferably to write a book, however bad, or to get a friend to write one or, if everything else fails, to get your guide to write a book (Christian Klucker). Finally, if even that fails, get killed on one of the best of peaks, and perhaps coming generations will name the particular bit of rock after you, and fame is yours for ever.



62. *Phillips and Spilsbury on Stedtind.*

# Walking: 1919-1939

*by Philip Brockbank*

Members of the hard-walking fraternity of the early days after World War 1 must have found that the most interesting contributions to the 1919 Journal were the two brief reports of walks of a severity not previously met with in the Club's annals. They were written by Eustace Thomas; very soon afterwards all the active members - rock-tigers and fellhounds alike - were swept into strenuous action by the whirlwind of Eustace's pursuit of the Lake District Fell Record.

It was while he was enjoying a strenuous holiday with Norman Begg, bagging all the Lakeland Twentyfives, in the late summer of 1918, that Begg suggested that the two of them should next year attempt the Fell Record, held since 1905 by Dr.AW.Wakefield. Eustace readily accepted the suggestion, sublimely unintimidated by the fact that he would then be in his 50th year and had never before undertaken any walks or Alpine expeditions above the ordinary. The two long-distance walks were undated; but as his reports of them carry no suggestion of winter conditions and, to be in time for the 1919 Journal, must have been in editor Scott's hands long before Easter, we might fairly assume that they had taken place in the autumn of 1918.

One of them was to some extent a repeat of Dawson's Colne-Buxton, but finishing at Dove Holes. The 51 miles were covered in 17 hours 57 minutes, which included about 2 hours of halts. There is no indication of the route followed. His only companion was Begg.

The other walk was the 37½ miles of the Derwent Watershed from a base at the Yorkshire Bridge Inn, one of the Club's favourite hostelrys of that time. The watershed, which in those days was well marked with short stakes, was kept to rigorously despite its not infrequent zig-zags and sharp corners. His companions were Begg, Humphry, Schaanning, and Walker. Details of the route - in particular, that between Kinder and Yorkshire Bridge - were not given. They were nevertheless ferreted out by the late Eric Byne in the course of his extensive researches for his part of "High Peak". It appears that the party began with Win Hill, crossed the Hope Valley to Lose Hill, and reached Kinder by way of Rushup Edge and Colborne. The time taken by Eustace and Begg for the whole circuit was 11 hours 39 minutes. The rest of the party took nearly an hour longer. "An exceptionally fine walk, on mountain and moorland from start to finish", Eustace concluded.

When the time came to attempt the Fell Record, Begg had had to drop out, in order to take up a business post in America. Eustace's first two attempts took place during the Whitsuntide holidays of 1919 and 1920. In each of them he assumed that to break the record required the completion of Dr.Wakefield's 1905 course of 23,000 ft. in a shorter time than Wakefield's 22 hours 7 minutes. In 1919 he was not yet fit enough and took over 28 hours, but in 1920 he completed the course in 21 hours 25 minutes - only to find that what was really required to



63. *Thomas and Helpers 1921.*

break the record was the completion of a longer round (with more feet of ascent) within the 24 hours.\*

It is curious that Wakefield, who was closely associated with Eustace on the latter's attempts - in particular that of 1920 - and who must surely have known what the rule was, did not so inform Eustace. In his obituary notice of Wakefield in our 1950 Journal, Eustace attributes this seeming negligence to Wakefield's sportsmanship.

The year 1921 included two attempts of which the only particulars now available are that they "failed through hot thunderous conditions" (RCJ 1951). A fourth attempt took place in 1922. This time it was undeniably successful, for a course which included 2,000ft. more of ascents than Wakefield's was covered in 13 minutes less than his 1905 time. After a two-hour rest, Eustace, still unwearied, went on to collect a group of Grasmoores to bring his total ascents to 30,000ft. in 28 hrs. 35 mins. from the original start from Keswick.

It has been suggested that his interest in the Fell Record was that of an engineer rather than an athlete. This assumption is perhaps supported by his article "Mountaineering Endurance" on page 197 of the 1921 Journal. Thus "Each muscle cell acts as an internal combustion engine. Every effort and every contraction doing work means that a tiny but exactly definite quantity of fuel (food) is burnt in an equally exact quantity of oxygen brought by the blood from the lungs". Also "Mechanics of Walking. Engineers must not judge walking and climbing by foot-pounds only."

*\*I have never been clear as to who were the authorities who adjudicated on these attempts. They were certainly not the Fell & Rock, who officially disapproved of such "racing over the fells" Nor our own Club, the Committee of which decided in June 1920 that it would be, "a new and undesirable departure for the Club to enter an official recognition of records such as this, as it might introduce and encourage the purely competitive element into our sport".*

This record was not appreciably beaten until after the second war; for Bob Graham's success in 1932 added only 500 feet of ascent and 1½ miles of distance in 1¼ hrs. over Eustace's Keswick-to-Keswick time.

Eustace's own performances are well documented (RCJs 1920, 1921, 1923, and 1951). Less so are those of the corps of Club members who helped him by carrying his gear, assisting with the route finding, and satisfying the requirements of the Record by "observing" him on each summit.

His organisation provided for their being relieved at various points on the course. Thus Arnfield and Gilliat accompanied him from Keswick to Gable; Freedman and Huntbatch for the Mosedale round; Ping and Hirst from Wasdale to Langdale; Richards and Humphry from Langdale to Threlkeld; and Manning and Burton the rest of the way. But the helpers, having trained with Thomas during the intervening years, were seldom content with the fragment of the course allotted to them. Thus Arnfield and Gilliat, having parted from Thomas on Gable, cut over to Scafell to rejoin the pack at Mickledore. Similarly with the others. As Eustace said, "those who took part in earlier sections joined in on one or two of the later ones and put in some remarkable impromptu performances." It would have been interesting to know what total heights some of the helpers covered.

Teams of other helpers, including some of the members' wives, and organised by Harry and Mrs. Summersgill, operated at valley level to supply refreshment and provide massage at the various rest points.

Eustace was mildly amused at the Fell & Rock's disapproval of "racing over the fells". He himself looked on such exploits as basically mountaineering: "It would appear that this test makes as near an approach to the conditions of the greater mountaineering as this country can afford. There are no new ascents possible, and no glaciers, but there were the difficulties of cold, bog, and rain, and of a journey through the mountains at night without moon." (RCJ 1923:101)\*

In between the actual attempts he paid two visits to Wales in 1919 and there carried out two walks of importance, recorded in the 1920 Journal, page 135. One was the South Wales Twentyfives with Corbett. They left Hay at 9.28 and did not reach Carmarthen Van - the last top - until 11.41 next day. The other was collecting the Welsh 3000s from Aber to Snowdon summit in 22½ hrs. This too was undated, but Herbert Carr in "The Mountains of Snowdonia" gives the dates as 9th and 10th August 1919 and his companions as Corbett and Dr. Wakefield. It would appear a fair deduction from Carr's note that this was the first of the "Welsh Threes" expeditions, though not yet a circuit of them.

It was also in 1919 that he had the holiday with Walker amusingly described by the latter in the article in the 1920 Journal, "The Caravaners Up-to-date". The

*\*This looks rather like special pleading on Eustace's part. For on the attempt itself he had helpers to carry all his kit (including the boots required for the descent from Yewbarrow) and assist in finding the tops (the ways to which would in any case have been familiar to most of them), and prearranged stations to provide refreshment and massage. None of which aids could well be called "an approach to the conditions of greater mountaineering".*



**64. Minor, Wakefield and Corbett.**

the Club meets have been published. One wonders why Eustace, so obviously interested in speed, apparently made no attempt to set up new times for the standard moorland courses. One of the exploits which for combined speed and distance would have been worthy of him would have been the point-to-point from Hebden Bridge to Edale, which (as we shall see later) had to be covered in under ten hours to suit the railway timetable. He did in fact do that walk, but the time taken and course followed are not known; the only anecdote of that excursion that has survived by word of mouth was the fact - or rather the alleged fact - that Eustace came near to being run in by the Hebden Bridge constabulary on account of his tramp-like appearance.

The Handbooks show that he was down to lead a Glossop-Bamford in March 1920, a Woodhead-Diggle in February 1921, a Chinley-Bamford in January 1923, and a Hazlehead-Rowsley in October 1924. Thereafter his name appears no more as the leader of a strenuous walk. He presumably took part in the Club's first Beddgelert-Llandudno Junction (in 1922) as he appears to have suggested it. But Freedman's report in the 1923 Journal annoyingly omits the names of the contestants.



**65. Fred Heardman.**

caravan concerned was a home-made affair, arrived at by obtaining a Ford tourer, removing the body, and replacing it by an ambulance body, of which there appeared to be a number spare from the war just ended. From that mobile base they collected a number of outlying Twentyfives, including the Cheviot.

At other times his training was presumably carried out on the home moors but no details of walks other than

After Eustace had acquired the Fell Record and had naturally lost interest in the home moors as a training ground, though he remained a regular attender of the Club's moorland meets, the inspiration for the Pennine walking passed to a member who had joined in 1922 and was to become the most devoted of the Club's many lovers of the Pennine moors: Fred Heardman.

I am spared the task of attempting to portray him, for as recently as the 1969 Journal there appeared an interview with him that not only brings him vividly to life as we younger members knew him but also

recreates the conditions met with by the moorland walker during his active years up to the mid 1920's and beyond -as will be shortly described.

Fred's devotion was shown by his liking for what in those days was termed "a dirty do". The blacker the night, the thicker the mist, the wetter the rain, the more he seemed to enjoy himself. One of his favourite ploys, invariably shared with Stephen ("Mac") Forrester, was to repair of a late Saturday afternoon in winter to some pub on the fringe of the moors - such as the old "Bill o' Jacks" above Greenfield. There they would wait, sampling the entertainment of the house, until the night was truly dark, and then set out (no doubt well fortified) to find their way over the moors to one of the cabins - such as one of the two near Laddow - and, provided the cabin could be found, spend the rest of the night there. The use of such extraneous aids as torches was strictly forbidden. Anyone who has ever been faced with the task of finding such a cabin, using any aids available including daylight - will appreciate the extent of the party's devotion.

Another ardent lover of the moors was Harry Gilliat. He loved them in a strange way, for he never seemed content to traverse them except at a remarkably swift pace; and as it could be said of him that

The dun deer's hide

On fleeter foot was never tied,

this predilection meant that although any strong party of walkers would have been glad and proud of his company, he seemed in fact to prefer to be out on his own. His fast walking was characterised by a graceful style - a gentle lilt with a slight lateral oscillation by which he could be picked out in a busy city street and which seemed to tell of an infinity of tireless miles.

A sketch of the background conditions for the hard walker in those days seems worth attempting. By the early 1920s the disastrous effect on the cotton trade brought about by India's introduction in 1917 of an import duty on Lancashire cotton goods was beginning to be felt. Several members of the hard-walking team were "in cotton" at the time and others who were not were also adversely affected. Thus they all tended to be somewhat hard-up and - what is more to our present point - few of them could afford to run a car. For the special away meets in the Lakes or Wales - such as Easter - sufficient lifts could usually be provided in the cars of the more affluent Club members; but such help was seldom available for the regular Sunday outings on the home moors.

Reliance had therefore to be made on public transport. Fortunately - by the middle and later 1920s at least - it was good. Sunday morning trains from the City centre, departing not too early to allow the stations to be reached in time by train or bus, would normally arrive at Chinley, Hayfield, or Glossop shortly before 10.00; and Edale and Hazlehead Bridge (a station, now closed, about 4 miles short of Penistone on the main line to Sheffield) by about 10.30.

For those able to get to town before the City's Sunday morning transport system had sprung into action there was the famous 7.50 to Marsden, which would get there a little before 9.00 - that is, assuming the train had not been held up on the way to take on board a professional theatre party, as had been known to happen more than once. There was also the 6.40 (too early for most of us, but not - I gather

- for our rivals the Manchester Rambling Club and the Bog Trotters), due to reach Glossop at 7.28 and Hazlehead Bridge at 8.14; and another at 8.00 due to reach Hebden Bridge at 9.20. For the return, at least one train after 8.00 p.m. was available from Chinley, Glossop, Hayfield, and (at 8.25) from Edale. As the risk of missing the 8.25 was seldom taken, the most useful and best patronised return train was the equally famous 7.12 from Edale - then, as now, the favourite Derbyshire village to "finish up at in".

Though up to 1919 rail fares were comparatively high, they rapidly became more favourable. By the second half of the 1920s returns at the price of singles were available on Sundays to all stations the walker needed. Tickets to allow a return from a different station at the price of a single to or from whichever was the further were also introduced and long lists of these "Walking Tour" tickets were published. The pairs of stations concerned were usually near enough to provide a walk of moderate distance over recognised ways; but by the late 1930s one was actually available for the Marsden-Edale - thereby approximately halving the rail cost of that expedition.

These favourable terms were probably due to - and no doubt partly the cause of - the epidemic of "rambling" that hit the City towards the end of the 1920s. On fine summer Sundays the queues for the morning trains from what was then Central station sometimes stretched as far back as the Midland Hotel. When, years later, the craze reached London, a spurious air of originality was imparted to the pursuit by re-naming it "hiking".

Half-hourly bus services ran to Glossop and Hayfield; but as cheap day returns were not available on them and they were much slower than the trains, they seldom offered serious competition. As the Hayfield buses went by way of Stockport, however, they could be of some use to residents in that area who could less easily reach the Hayfield trains.

Places for refreshment were plentiful and cheap, for in those days many country folk were sufficiently glad of the opportunity of making a little money at the weekend to put up with the trouble involved and - more onerous - tolerate the litter which the average rambling party, bringing its own food, so often left behind it.

Specially prized by the walker were the farms with their kindly welcome and generous hospitality; the moorland inns, similarly welcoming and not yet pulled down or modified both in design and genuineness of welcome to suit the motorist; and the moorland cabins (very few left now, thanks mainly to the vandals of the 1950s) where the hardier walker, equipped with Primus stove and lavish provender, hoped to spend the Saturday night.

Supreme among places for a lunchtime halt was the George and Dragon at Woodhead, a mile west of the station and the appropriate half-time halting place for the Marsden-Edale. Inns are usually reluctant to serve tea during opening hours since they can usually make much more profit from the bar. But what the weary grouse-hound wants after struggling over Black Hill is a hot drink. And at the George even those who only wanted one of their pint mugs of tea were always made welcome, however travel-stained they might look, and allowed to eat their sandwiches in the bar parlour in front of a roaring fire.



For Pennine weekends the favourite place for a few years after the war was the Yorkshire Bridge Inn, (near Bamford), under the benign but despotic rule of Mrs.Eyre. For a time it was customary to hold a private New Year party there, under the leadership of Walker. And, as we have seen, it was the base from which the first Derwent Watershed walk was carried out. Heardman remembered how on the evenings of the New Year Meets the Eyres would retire to bed at a conventional time, allowing the party to help itself in the bar and settle up next day. Later, the Eyres moved a mile or so northwards to Ladybower, where descendants of the Eyre family remained to provide breakfasts to several all-night walkers after the next war. By the early 1920s the Club's weekend Pennine meets had been transferred from Derbyshire to Yorkshire: to the Waggon and Horses at Langsett and Blake Lea farm near Marsden. References to each of them will be made later. The year 1930 saw the opening of another port of call which was to prove the most popular of all to the hard-walking fraternity, whether for weekends or casual meals, for the next 20 years - Tunstead House, 1½ miles east of Hayfield. One further benediction - long vanished, too - of those far-off days was the solitude of the moors, visited of a Sunday by only the dedicated few.

All these favourable conditions for the long-distance moorland walkers were offset by a highly unfavourable one in the shape of the grouse-moor gamekeeper. The slopes of Kinder facing Hayfield, of Kinder facing the Snake road, and of Bleaklow facing Glossop, were strictly preserved throughout the year. Rather less so were the other slopes of Bleaklow, which were presumably impracticable to guard successfully. Other landowners and keepers - in particular those of the Edale side of Kinder and the wide extent of the Derwent moors - adopted the



**66. Tunstead in Heavy Snow.**

more reasonable attitude of allowing access from the end of the shooting season to the beginning of the nesting, and expected the rambler to keep off at other times.

The friendlier keepers even left their cabins unlocked, and so available for night-walk meals or all-night occupancy. Their hospitality in that respect was honoured by at least the thoroughbred clubs, who for their own interests tried to leave a cabin as clean and tidy as they had found it.

Thus whilst such modern favourite expeditions as the multiple crossings of Kinder were out of the question, even the most restricted moor was found to be accessible if a route were carefully planned and timed in reliance on the knowledge that the keepers guarded only the approaches, seldom the summit levels and ridges, and had usually gone home by teatime, certainly by nightfall.

Thus for a winter afternoon's finish from Win Hill over Kinder to Hayfield, it was only necessary to keep well wide of the barn near Hope Cross (where a keeper was supposed to lurk) when approaching Crookstone Knoll, and perhaps keep inland of the edges overlooking Edale; for when the time came to drop off from Kinder Low it would be getting dark and the keeper assuredly back home at his tea. It was similarly easy enough to reach Bleaklow Head from Glossop if one avoided the spurs which extend in that direction and instead kept to the Doctor's Gate track till nearly under Higher Shelf Stones and then went slantwise up its slopes to the top. As the Marsden-Edale was usually held in winter when the Bleaklow keepers' vigilance was relaxed, there was seldom much difficulty in reaching the summit ridge by way of Wildboar or Stable Clough; and by the time the party had refreshed at the Snake, the local keeper would have called it a day.

Little information is now available about the walks that were popular in the 1920s except what can be gleaned from the programmes given in the Club's annual Handbooks. It is true that Heardman kept some sort of a diary but after his death it was found that even his best friend Donald Berwick was unable to decipher much of it.

Some of the more strenuous meets listed in the 1920/25 Handbooks may be briefly mentioned. The existence of a friendly inn at Yorkshire Bridge attracted walks to finish at Bamford after starting from Glossop, Hazlehead, Crowden, or Chinley. With Edale as the goal, starts were made from Chinley, Woodhead, Hope, Glossop, and (off the train to Hebden Bridge) Littleborough.

Most of these starting places would be familiar to the modern walker except Hazlehead Bridge. From that admirable springboard a short mile of road brought one to the Flouch and the start of the track to Cut Gate. There one had a choice of three widely different routes: over Bleaklow to Hayfield; by way of Westend, the Alport, and Kinder to Edale; or along the Derwent Edges to Bamford or beyond. The station has long been closed. Penistone is a poor substitute, being four miles further by rail, inflicting an additional mile of road, and - worst of all at the start of a hard day - throwing away the first 250 ft. of ascent.

Night walks of undefined extent were based on Craven District, Dove Dale, and Bowland Forest. Another - more adventurous - was from Penrith to Windermere. More adventurous still, was an all-night walk featuring Ben Alder. It was carried

out, too, (which is not certain of any of the others) as witnesseth Freedman's amusing report in the 1924 Journal.

Among the 1924 meets were two which, on looking back, are seen to have a special significance. One was the 30 mile Hebden Bridge to Edale - a walk rendered especially arduous if the 7.12 at Edale was the target, since the first train to Hebden Bridge on a Sunday, as we have seen, was not due to get there until 9.20 and so allowed less than ten hours for those 30 moorland miles. Though performed at least once by a party dominated by Eustace Thomas for training purposes, as already mentioned, this entry in the Handbook amounted to the first appearance of a walk of that severity as an official Club meet. That the member who was down to lead it was the newly-joined Heardman suggests that he was already considered the Club's master groug-hound. The other meet was a walk from Hazlehead to Rowsley. Its significance will appear shortly.

An interesting feature of the Club's harder walking in those days was that no one seemed to bother about times - i.e. trying to put up records - and even frowned on novices who talked of them. Perhaps they had had enough of clockwatching when out with Eustace Thomas. It was not until the arrival in the 1930s of a younger generation who knew not Eustace - not the Eustace of his record-breaking days - that one could discuss one's times for, say, the Marsden-Edale without incurring a reproof.

Competition of a more subtle kind, however, was not unknown. For once the misty moors had been gained, the rival groug-hounds would accelerate away from the main party and spread out, each intent on doing his rivals in (in Eliza's phrase) by reaching the destination first. But as fair-minded Nature does not always supply brawn with a corresponding quantity of brain, the wilier tortoises of the party, by dint of more skilled navigation, have been known to finish not far behind the hares.

The main pedestrian event of 1924 was the conquest of the Scottish Fours, using a car to bridge the 50 mile gap between the two mountain groups. Suggested by someone unknown and planned at the 1924 Easter Meet at Fort William, the plan was carried out at Whitsun. The contestants were Heardman, Gilliat, Richards, and Eustace Thomas, the last-named also providing transport for most of the journey north.

Not thinking of any competition from outside, the party did not hurry unduly, interested only in keeping within the 24 hrs. from Achintee to the last Cairngorm top, Braeriach. The time taken for it was 22 hrs. 38 mins. On the publication of the 1925 issue of our Journal, containing Richard's account of the expedition ("A Long 'Day' in the Highlands"), the Club was informed by Chorley of the Fell and Rock that a party of theirs had covered the ground a few days before ours, in the better time of 20 hrs. 20 mins. As may well be imagined, the news roused Eustace to organise a repeat performance in June 1925, this time employing only Heardman and Gilliat for the attack and himself only providing the movable launching pad. Result : the lowering of the record to 14 hrs. 37 mins. (RCJ 1926:454).

Though the 1926 programme may have lacked something of interest, a certain private venture did not. The idea of eclipsing the longest known moorland walk - Dawson's Colne-Buxton - by adding to most of it the Hazlehead-Rowsley and so

bringing the distance to about 70 miles, was said to have been evolved during March of that year in consultation between Heardman and the stocky and taciturn Harold Gerrard, who had joined the Club in 1924. Their plans having reached the ears of Firth Burton, the conspirators bought his silence by adding him to the party.

The main problem with the route was concerned with that part of it which linked the two walks. In order to include as much of the Hazlehead-Rowsley route as was practicable, they planned to leave the Colne-Edale line soon after Black Hill and take an ESE course down to Dunford Bridge. From there a rising line in the same ESE direction would take them to the Woodhead - Sheffield road at Milton Lodge (an inn, long since closed, a mile west of the Flouch) whence the Cut Gate track would be gained about two miles south of Hazlehead Bridge.

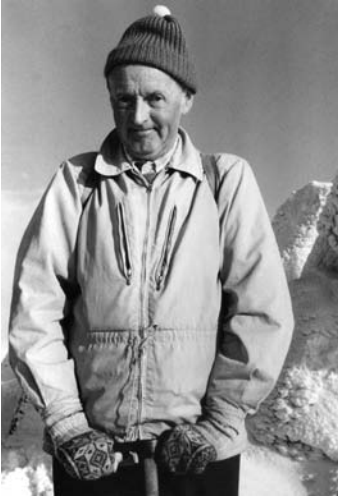
In the event, this difficult and unfamiliar terrain, impeded to begin with by darkness, threw them considerably astray enough to add two miles to the minimum distance, according to Burton, though surely that was an exaggeration. They had already lost time on the Colne-Marsden section, to the extent of being an hour late at Blake Lea, where (nevertheless) "dinner had been ordered at midnight but was still in good condition". How typical of Blake Lea to be willing to put on a meal at such a preposterously late hour!

From Cut Gate their route would have kept to the Hazlehead-Rowsley line over Margery Hill, either turning the head of Abbey Brook by a long divergence to the east or going straight across by the cabin and the subsequent 700 foot ascent to Back Tor; with a further 700 foot ascent by way of Jarvis Clough to Stanage. They must have been very late, for it was lunch time when they were at Ladybower, whereas subsequent parties have usually breakfasted there. On Stanage, Gerrard dropped out with knee trouble, but was to succeed when the walk was repeated next year.

Profiting by the first party's experience, later ones between the wars usually left Colne soon after lunch there, with the aim of catching a 6.00 p.m. train at Rowsley. Nowadays, of course, with no longer a railway "down the dales", parties have to organise their own transport home, unless content with an interminable journey by bus. For the next 26 years this most famous of the Club's moorland inventions remained the longest of the standard walks - the walk which every ambitious grough-hound had to do, to be thought of (if only by himself) as "a Colne-Rowsley man".

Whatever the merits of the walk as a walk, it nevertheless serves as a poor testpiece, since the last 30 miles admit of soft options which considerably diminish the stamina required. Thus a party that owed no allegiance to the Hazlehead-Rowsley route - perhaps having never heard of it - and intent only on reaching Rowsley by the line of least resistance (at least after Marsden) could make from Black Hill to the Derwent Watershed by a fairly direct line, and from there, by dropping down to the river tracks and omitting the moorland passage over Margery Hill and Back Tor, have a much easier time than the pioneers, especially if the 700 foot ascent to Stanage was also omitted.

Such a soft alternative was resorted to by most of the first repeat party in 1927, of whom only Jennings (newly transferred from the forward line of the toughest MRC grough-hounds) kept to the moors, the other five taking the valley route once the Derwent Watershed had been reached.



67. Frank Kiernan.

The opening of the Club Hut in 1927 with Heardman as its Warden had a doubly attenuating effect on the Club's walking programmes. The disappearance of Heardman from the Pennine scene left no one to inspire to the same extent our moorland activities;\* whilst the hut meets tended to be at the expense of the walking meets. Perhaps it was due to these causes that apart from four favourite weekend walking meets which remained on the Club's programme, the list of meets given in the Handbooks from 1927 onwards lacked much of the interest of the earlier ones - with some notable exceptions to be mentioned in due course.

One of the favourite walking meets above referred to was the Marsden-Edale. This was usually performed as a weekend affair with the night at Blake Lea, to which the more insatiable grouse-hounds walked over from Greenfield or Diggle, or even (on one occasion) from Todmorden, on the Saturday afternoon. One of the advantages of doing the walk that way was that it allowed members to take part who would have been unable to catch the 7.50 train on the Sunday morning. Another, the route for the first five miles from Marsden which Blake Lea's position a mile west of the station allowed to be taken, was more interesting than the Wessenden paths.

But perhaps the strongest lure was the Saturday evening meal which the good Mrs. Biltcliffe put on for us and the subsequent hours of repletion round the fire, discussing past Marsden-Edales, the decadence of the non-grouse-hound part of the Club, or the present symptoms of the Club's leading hypochondriac. The natural route next morning began with a mile of southward-bound main road almost to Standedge cutting and thence roughly SE over Round Hill, Black Moss, and White Moss to the Isle of Skye road. Some finesse was needed to begin with, since Black Moss consisted of an uncharted sea of low but complicatedly interdigitated grouse which would make progress too arduous.\*\* at least at such an early stage of the walk. The finesse involved the use of a leat to gain South Clough, which would then be followed until it ejected the traveller on to the easy but sodden going of White Moss. The desideratum was to hit the road precisely at the 20th milestone. After which a rather dreary two miles led to the summit of Black Hill.

*\*At about the same time as he became Warden, Heardman succeeded Richards as Outdoor Organiser; but after 1926 the only meets under Heardman's leadership were those at the Hut.*

*\*\*And too slow - if a rival party was known to be coming out by train.*

Piquancy would be added to the meet if the Blake Lea party was indeed aware that a rival party would be on the 7.50, for the difficult question would have to be decided how much earlier than the train arrival time would the house party have to set out to make up for the longer and harder route to Black Hill. The hospitality of the George at Woodhead meant that everyone repaired there for lunch; and that in turn meant that the preferred way up Bleaklow would be by Stable Clough. As the destruction of the George in 1960 left the only possible source of refreshment at Crowden, the usual continuation since then would be by way of the less attractive Wildboar Clough.

The last before the war was enlivened by the machinations of the Ginger Group - a coterie of climbers who held that the Club in general and the grough-hounds in particular were effete and degenerate. To demonstrate this they entered a pack for the Marsden-Edale with the avowed intention of showing the grough-hounds up. There was no snow that year but a SE wind of infra-Arctic cold had frozen the peat flats to a hardness resistant to, but just acceptive of, tricounis.

The challengers came out on the 7.50 whereas their rivals were based on Blake Lea. To overcome the handicap of the harder going, the latter gave themselves a start of 45 mins. on the estimated arrival of the train. This, of course, was later denounced by the Ginger Group as far too much. Perhaps it was. Only one of the challengers (Ken Barber) was able to compete with the grough-hounds. Though he did not quite manage to finish first, he put such a fear of God - or rather of the Ginger Group - in the leading grough-hounds that the day may in fairness be adjudged to have been his.

An even greater favourite between the wars was the Langsett weekend, usually held in winter. So popular was it that it was included in the outdoor programmes



68. Glossop-Llangsett 1923.

of the 21 Handbooks from 1920 to 1940 no less than 23 times. The programme was to walk the 16 miles from Glossop to Langsett on the Saturday, spend the night at the Waggon and Horses under the hospitable but anxious care of Mrs.Green, and on the Sunday take a relaxed go-as-you-please course to Edale, usually by way of a sandwich lunch at Mrs.Thorp's in Derwent Village, then unsubmerged.

From Glossop the preferred route traversed the full length of the Bleaklow massif, which on a Saturday would be unprotected by keepers, from Bleaklow Head to Barrow Stones and Round Hill, and thence take a slantwise course across the Derwent up to Cut Gate at its highest point and so north-east down Midhope Moor to Langsett. The attraction was partly due to the splendour of that Saturday's route, for the moorland scenery in the region of Bleaklow Stones and Barrow Stones was unmatched in England. \*

A further attraction lay in the fact that despite its short distance, the Saturday walk possessed a sporting flavour for the young grouse-hound. In those days before the coming of the five-day week he would usually be tied to a city desk until Saturday noon and so could not possibly reach Glossop by public transport before

1.00 p.m.; and later than that if he had to change from his office to his outdoor clothes on the way. The afternoon being a winter's one, that delay in starting would impose on him a race against time if he were to have the assistance of some residual measure of daylight in finding Cut Gate from the Bull Stones direction and so identifying the point for turning from ESE to NE. The fact that the Cut Gate track is in places just a slight depression in the moor meant that even an inch or two of snow might be enough to hide it even in daylight. The penalty for crossing Cut Gate unbeknownst and so holding an easterly course too long would be to cause him to be seized by the octopian tentacles of the upper Ewden, the descent of which river, if persisted in, would add an exhausting couple of hours on the walk and result in his being humiliatingly greeted by his successful rivals on his late arrival at dinner.

Hence the alleged crime of having once "gone down the Ewden" was the accusation which anyone with pretensions to moorland expertise was likely to have cast in his teeth if only to start a ribald argument at some social Club evening.\*\*

To ensure that the handicap was sufficiently effective the Outdoor Meets Organiser of the day would usually try to select for the date the longest moonless night of the winter. The Saturday walk was also attractive to the veterans, who could usually take the morning off and so enjoy the fine scenery in comfort. But even they, if caught by darkness, have at times been known - or alleged - to have "gone down the Ewden". Who invented the meet does not appear to be known now. Possibly it was William Walker. In its last years it was usually led by that most

*\*It still is; though the view north will lose much of its wildness if the Woodhead-Flouch road becomes a motorway.*

*\*\*The names of some of those so accused are given on page 88 of our 1935 Journal. The opposite mistake of turning NE too soon would rapidly bring the deep trench of Bull Clough athwart one's path and so force a descent due N to the Porter of Little Don, a considerably less serious divergence.*

popular son of Dorset, Jack Harris, who, on attempting to explain to a harassed Mrs.Green that his lateness of arrival was due to some fault in his compass, was brusquely instructed to remember to wind it up next time.

Nearly as popular as the Langsett meet (though far less exacting) and appearing without a break in the Club's programme from 1928 to the war was the joint meet with the Wayfarers at Llanarmon, where the West Arms provided a hospitable base from which on the Sunday expeditions could be made to view Pistyll Rhaiadr or tick-off the nearby Berwyn Twentysives.

The fourth of the favourite walking weekends was the one based in the Settle district, usually at the Hill Inn at Chapel-le-Dale, and joint with the Gritstone Club. Earlier meets in the neighbourhood appear to have been mainly for the pot-holing and it was not until April 1932 that the potholers took second place and the fell-hounds were unleashed on the round of the Three Peaks. On that memorable occasion the three Rucksackers who were rash enough to throw aside the mask of sociability and indulge in competition were soundly trounced by the leading Grit. The Club apparently needed time to recover from its vain exertions on that occasion, for the meet did not again appear on the programme until 1935.

The novelties in the last ten programmes before the war began with "Windgather and Night Walk" in September 1930. After a few climbs, the survivors of the party struggled through darkness and mist on Shining Tor and "black night" on Chrome Hill to the headwaters of the Dove, which they descended as far as Thorpe. From there they took a line NE across country to finish at Darley Dale.

The leader of the expedition was Robin Gray, not as yet in sight of the Editorship, and the party had the distinction of including the great H.M.Kelly, the President, evincing by his attendance that devotion to his Presidential duties on which Doughty was to compliment him when proposing his health at the 1930 Dinner. It is less easy to explain the presence of Herbert Hartley, liege lord of Laddow; perhaps it was to see that Kelly came to no harm on Windgather.

To celebrate the last year of his Presidency, Entwisle suggested that a walk from Chorley to Ripponden might agreeably introduce members to moors they had largely neglected. The event took place in March 1933. The only member to complete the 33 miles of the course was Alan Deane, in a little over 12 hours. His view in brief was that the moorland parts of the walk were not good enough to make up for the dullness of the valleys, with their roads, railways, canals, and chicken farms. His two companions - a new member and myself - dropped out after 12 miles. In his report in the 1933 Journal he kindly attributed our defection to trouble with feet. For myself, the real reason was that I could not stay the pace which Alan rightly considered necessary.

March 1935 included for the first time a Glossop-Rowsley, to be led by Edgar Holliday. He had come to us from the Bog Trotters - a coterie of exceedingly strong walkers (especially over the moors) who scorned the Dinners and lectures and journals of clubs such as ours, much as the Rock and Ice men were to do after the next war. From the BTs we derived some of our hardest goers - such as Walter Riley and Rees Williams, as well as Holliday himself. Holliday certainly had a reputation with us, for it was he who, in the company of another of our members, Denis





69. Walter Riley.

Crofton, performed one of the first major walks based on T y B: a fast traverse of the Welsh Threes, in 1932.

They left the hut at 5 a.m. for the Carneddys, to finish on Crib Goch and be down at Pen y Pass by 8.20 p.m. From there they returned to their own car, which they had parked at Pen y Pass the previous day. (RCJ 1933:300). Their time of not more than 15 hours from T y B to the last summit compares favourably with the 22½ hours from Aber to Snowdon summit in 1919 taken by Eustace Thomas's party (which included at least one member considerably below Eustace's standard of speed) as mentioned above.\*

And then on the 19th and 20th June, 1937, came perhaps the most enterprising of the meets of these last ten years: Hey's Shap-Wasdale night-walk. In his youth, Hey had twice walked from Shap to Wasdale, carrying a sleeping bag and taking two days over the journey. To celebrate his Presidency he suggested that the Club should do the walk as a single expedition. Much expert work by Hey and Alan Deane went into the planning. The walking party was taken by road to Milnthorpe to join a local train to Shap, the car owners continuing to Eskdale or Wasdale for the night to spend Sunday climbing and bring back the successful members of the walking party.

Starting from Shap in the late afternoon, the party went in fragmented groups up Swindale and then by way of Gatesgarth Pass, Harter Fell, Nan Bield, Mardale Ill Bell, Thornthwaite Crag, and Stony Cove Pike to the Kirkstone Inn, in time for a late meal. In the imperfect dark of a June night the usual Fairfield tops were traversed to Dunmail Raise. There in the grim early morning hours a devoted group of members and their wives, some from a camp in Grasmere, provided further refreshment. Even with that assistance, some of the party found the ascent of Steel Fell the most arduous of the whole walk. But once the height had been made, further labours by way of High Raise and Angle Tarn to Scafell Pikes in the sunshine of a perfect midsummer dawn seemed light by comparison. Deane

*\*T y B is approx. 1000 ft above the sea level of Aber could give a hut start some advantage; but much of that height would normally be lost on the way out to, or way back from, Foel Fras, at the higher intermediate tops; and the distance from the hut to Foel Fras is about a mile further than the distance to Foel Fras from Aber.*

estimated the distance as 31 miles with 10,050 ft. of ascents. Except at Dunmail Raise, the route from the south end of Swindale (Mosedale) to Brown Tongue on Scafell never falls below 1400 ft.

The originality of the course and the magnetic aura of the President attracted some 15 contestants (of whom 12 finished, including the President) and as many car-drivers and other helpers. The presence among the walkers of several veterans and some members rarely seen out with the Club resulted in the walk being generally conducted in a sociable manner. Deane and his friend Harold Kellett, however, in rubbers throughout, saw to it that the Club's athletic reputation was maintained by covering the 31 miles from the Greyhound at Shap to the Westwater Hotel in just under 14 hours, having lost an appreciable amount of time on the Fairfield traverse through greasy conditions unsuited to their footwear.

It was a pleasant feature of the walking meets of those days that the use of public transport rather than private cars meant that however much the party became disintegrated on the march, it usually travelled together on both the outward and return journeys. No doubt the wait on wind-swept Edale station on a cold winter's evening until the 7.12 - late again! - came panting up the hill from Hope could be something of a trial; but few social occasions of any kind could be as richly enjoyable as the subsequent journey, the entire party squeezed into one compartment, and the talk alive with explanation, allegation, and recrimination about the events of the day and hilarious reminiscences of past ones.

# Appendix I - Officers

## OFFICERS 1902 -1939

### President

Harold B. Dixon	1902-04
Joseph Collier	1905
Charles Pilkington	1906-08
Sir Alfred Hopkinson	1909-13
Charles H. Pickstone	1914-16
Philip S. Minor	1917-19
Charles H. Pickstone	1920
Harry E. Scott	1921-22
Harold B. Dixon	1923
Eustace Thomas	1924-25
Edgar H. Pryor	1926-27
Herbert J. Mothersill	1928-29
Harry M. Kelly	1930-31
John H. Entwisle	1932-33
J. Harry Doughty	1934-35
Wilson H. Hey	1936-37
Alfred S. Pigott	1938-39

### Treasurer

Philip S. Minor	1902-27
John Wilding	1928-45

### Joint Secretaries

Arthur E. Burns	} 1902-21
John H. Entwisle	
Arthur E. Burns	} 1922-30
Morley Wood	
Arthur E. Burns	} 1931-41
Arthur Burns	

### Editor

George T. Ewen	*1904-10
Ernest Broxap	1911-14
Harry E. Scott	1915-22
John Wilding	1923-26
J. Harry Doughty	1927-34
Robin Gray	1935-37
Priestley Phillips	1938
J. Geoffrey Dent	1939-43

### Librarian

Herbert Baxter	1902-03
Arnold F. Bury	1904-06
Harry E. Scott	1907-14
Herbert Baxter	1915-20
Frank Collins	1920-70

### Outdoor Meets Organiser

William E. Richards	1916-26
Fred Heardman	1927-30
G. Allan Deane	1931-38
L. Stanhope Coxon	1939-43

### Warden of T y B

Fred Heardman	1927-30
Richard R. Jennings	1930
Bert Sowerbutts	1931-32
Edgar Holliday	1933-36
Frank G. Bennett	1937-38
F. Alan Evans	1939

\*His first two numbers were the Second and Third "Annual Reports" of 1904/05 the First Report of 1903 having been produced by the Secretaries. The first "Journal" was that of 1907. The remaining dates in the list are those of the Journals, rather than the Editor's terms of office. The listing above has been revised to include many officer's full names, where the original used initials.

## Appendix II - Illustrations

The original typescript was published without illustrations, and the sections published in the 1976 and 1977 Journals were only sparsely illustrated. The great majority of copies of the images included here are selected from the collection in the Club Archives, and many have not so far appeared in general print.

Front Cover. Eric Byrom below Les Egralets, Chamonix. Photo: Basil Goodfellow.

Back Cover. Philip Brockbank. Photo: Alec Ferguson.

Biography. Philip Brockbank at the start of the first Tan-Cat in 1952.

Biography. Eric Byrom. Photo: Douglas Milner.

In 1904, following the suggestion of founder Vice-President George Milner the Club purchased an album in which to insert photographs of members. Unfortunately only thirty-two members provided pictures, and the album fell out of use.

1. Arthur Burns. Studio portrait from the first album.\*

2. John Entwisle. Studio portrait from the first album.\*

\*In the original album, the portraits of Burns and Entwisle are each titled "First Co-Secretary". Their identities were only determined after extensive research by successive Club Archivists and others.

3. Harold Dixon. Studio portrait from the first album.

4. Joe Collier tackles the Barn Door Traverse at Wasdale Head. Photo: Abraham Bros.

5. Alfred Hopkinson. Studio portrait.

6. Philip Minor. Studio portrait from the first album

7. Charles Pickstone at Cwm Eigiau. Photo: M.H.Adams. Taken in July or August 1912 when "Pickstone and party" were recorded as paying hut fees. This is the photo referred to in the text.

8. Pickstone, Scott and Minor. Photo: W.M.Huntbach. The title is the original from the frontispiece of the 1922 Journal. The picture is referred to in the text.

9. John Wilding. Photo: unattributed, RC Slide Archive.

10. John Rooke Corbett. Studio portrait from the first album.

11. 1902 Dinner Menu. The original was printed in red, blue and gold.

12. George Ewen. Studio portrait.

13. Reuben Brierley. Studio portrait.

14. Cwm Eigiau Hut. Photo: John Laycock. This was the image of the hut requested by Jeffcoat "from somewhere in France" and printed in the 1917 Journal. According to Scott's obituary of Jeff, he is the centre figure of the three.

15. Stanley Jeffcoat on The Scoop, Castle Naze, climbing barefoot. Photo: Alf Schaanning.

16. Anton Stoop. Photo: T.C.Ormiston-Chant.
17. Cancellation notice for the 1910 dinner, scheduled for Saturday November 12th.
18. Eustace Thomas. Studio portrait from the first album.
19. William Walker on Grindslow Knoll. Photo: Alf Schaanning, RC Slide Archive.
20. Bill Humphry. Studio portrait from the first album
21. Harry Summersgill. Photo unattributed.
22. Frank Collins. Studio portrait from the first album. One doubts whether anyone who remembers Frank would recognise him as a young man.
23. Morley Wood. Photo: Jack Fenton
24. Lehmann J.Oppenheimer. Photo unattributed – probably Abraham Bros.
25. 1919 Handbook – front cover. The cover is in stout card with an orange, wove fabric surface.
26. Harry Doughty. Photo: unattributed, possibly Donald Berwick. Outside his home in Burnage, near neighbour of Donald Berwick and Geoffrey Dent
27. Firth Burton, March 1965 on Kinder. Photo: Frank Solari
28. Firth Burton. Photo: Harold Gerrard. Frank Kiernan's explanation of the title of this photograph, published in the 1930 Journal, was that it was in complete contrast to Burton's usual highly energetic character.
29. Middlefell Farm, Langdale. One of Scott's earliest tailpieces from the 1915 Journal.
30. Greetings card from the Pinnacle Club, dining at the nearby Queen's Hotel, which was the prelude for an exchange of witty poems between Paddy and John Hirst.
31. Reg James. Photo: unattributed, but possibly by Frank Hurley, (Scott Polar Institute).
32. Grandes Jorasses. Photo: Eustace Thomas, frontispiece of the 1925 Journal as mentioned in the text.
33. Tal-y-Braich. Photo: Douglas Milner. The view with Tryfan in the background was a magnet for the Club photographers and artists.
34. Cyril Ward's cartoon, explained in the text.
35. Harold Gerrard. Photo: Frank Kiernan collection.
36. Mac Forrester serving tea at Tunstead House. Photo: Frank Solari.
37. Mac Forrester. Photo: Peter Wild, who took some fine action shots of Forrester exploring underground.
38. Alf Bridge (left) and Ivan Waller after winning the 1932 "Senior 50" 50 mile race at Phoenix Park, Dublin in Waller's Alvis Silver Eagle. Bridge was pressed into service after Waller's original mechanic had fallen out on a sharp bend and broken a collar bone. Photo: Irish Times.
39. Sir William Walker, Lord Mayor of Manchester, hosts Edward, Prince of Wales on a visit to Wythenshawe in July 1933. Note the Rucksack Club hands firmly in pockets. Photo: Manchester Guardian.
40. An early trial of the Thomas Stretcher. Photo unattributed. Only tentative identifications are possible – Fred Pigott? (hat), "Rusty" Westmorland (facing camera)? . . .

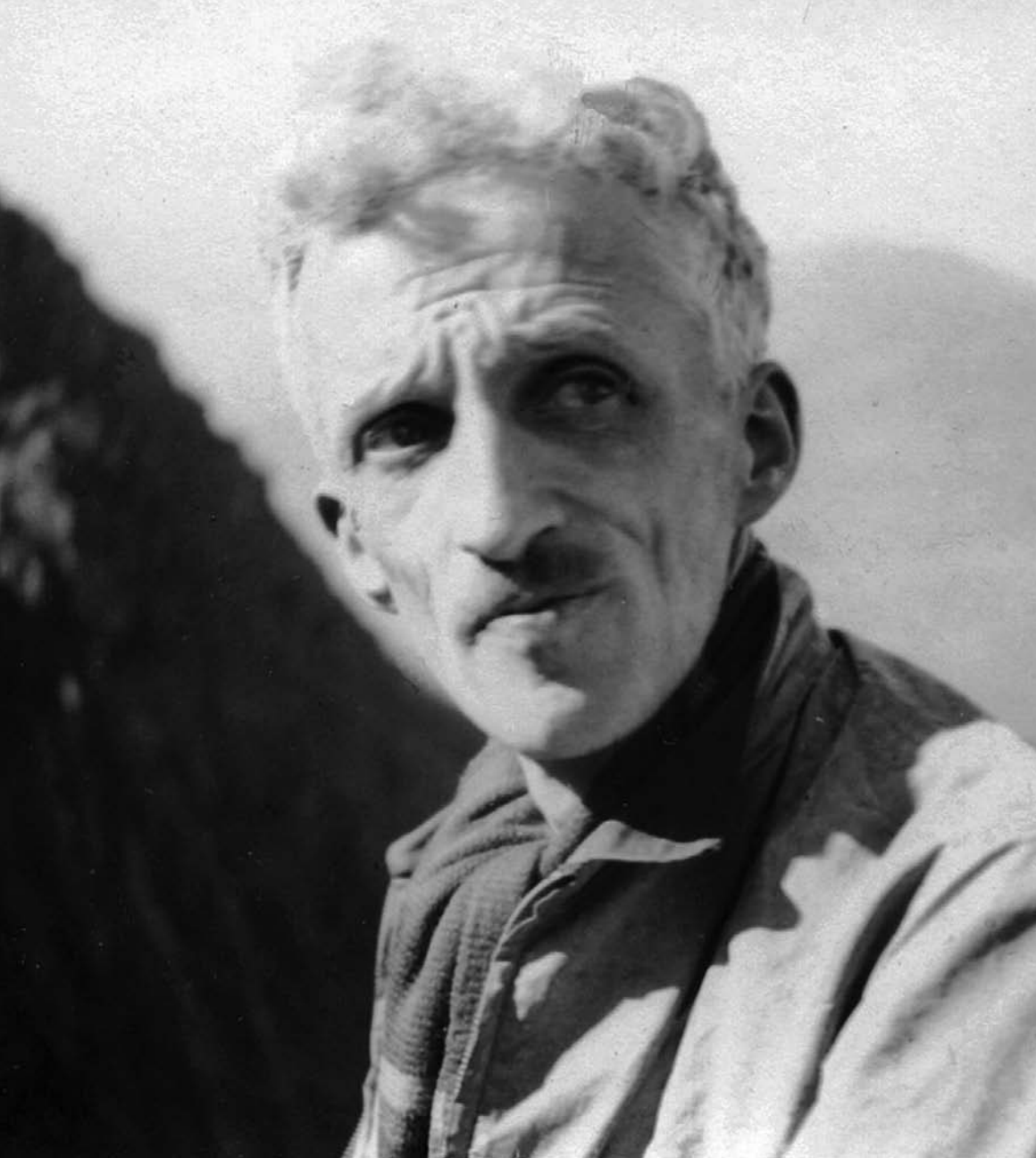
41. Wilson Hey. Photo: Douglas Milner.
42. Maurice Linnell about to set off on his motorbike. Photo: Sid Cross.
43. Various transport problems receiving attention. Photo unattributed.
44. Robin Gray climbing at Brassington, 1936. Photo unattributed: RC Slide Archive.
45. Alan Deane. Photo unattributed.
46. Tower Face, Laddow. A Club party of four demonstrating early rope technique (or lack of it). According to the caption in the 1918 Club Journal, this area was then known as Right Twin Buttress. In his accompanying article, Kelly suggested a set of more logical names for the various buttresses, which on the whole were taken into use. Photo: J.Rooke Corbett
47. Kelly on The Scoop, Castle Naze, using more orthodox footwear than Stanley Jeffcoat as portrayed in Schaanning's picture (No. 15). Photo unattributed.
48. Kelly with pillow inserted at Middlefell Farm, Langdale. Photo: Harry Doughty.
49. George Bower on Arête, Chimney and Crack, Dow Crag. Photo: Douglas Milner.
50. Rice Evans. Studio portrait from the first album.
51. Pigott's Climb: Lindley Henshaw looks on as Fred Pigott uses Morley Wood as a foothold on the first ascent. Photo: Firth Burton.
52. Edgar Pryor on Overhanging Chimney, Castle Naze. Photo: Eric Byrom.
53. John Jenkins. Photo: Ken Pearson.
54. Fred Pigott at the Roaches in 1941. Photo: Frank Solari.
55. George Bower: originally titled "The Happy Cragman" in the 1951 Club Journal. Photo: Norman How.
56. Club party, July 1929 on the North Ridge of the Zinal Rothorn. Photo unattributed: RC Slide Archive.
57. Les Restes du "Diable". Thomas with Taugwalder and Cachat after their traverse of the Aiguilles du Diable. Photo: Thomas collection.
58. Club Party on the Matterhorn Summit, July 1934. Photo unattributed: RC Slide Archive.
59. John Jenkins and Michael S.Taylor in the Caucasus, 1937. Photo unattributed – possibly Taylor.
60. North Face of Tetnuld, 4858m, Caucasus. Jenkins and Taylor made the first ascent of the face. Photo unattributed.
61. Bernard Nelstrop, John Chadwick and Eric Byrom, Nantillons Glacier 1937 after night out following a successful ascent of the Grépon. Photo: Bernard Nelstrop.
62. Priestley Phillips and Harry Spilsbury on the summit of Stedind. Photo unattributed, probably Alan Deane: RC Slide Archive.
63. Thomas and his "Helpers", 1921 at Seathwaite, photo from Scott's Rucksack Reminiscences Vol.II. Those pictured, identified by Scott, are: Standing – Ernest Royle, Harry Summersgill, Harold Ping, Frank Thomas, Bill Richards, Tom Arnfield, Jack Harris; Seated – W.G.Laughton, Bill Humphry, Mrs Humphry, Eustace Thomas, Nicholas Freedman. Not all the recorded supporters are present in the photo.

APPENDIX

64. Philip Minor, Arthur Wakefield and Rooke Corbett. Photo unattributed, possibly by Eustace Thomas. Taken the day after Wakefield, Corbett and Thomas did their Welsh 3s walk on 9/10 August 1919.
65. Fred Heardman. Photo: Donald Berwick.
66. Tunstead House in heavy snow. The two children playing in the snow are not named. Photo unattributed: RC Slide Archive.
67. Frank Kiernan – leader of several Marsden-Edales in the 1930s and later. Photo: Frank Solari.
68. Glossop-Langsett 1923. Photo: “Copy of snap given to me by Elsie Arnfield” (note by Donald Berwick.) Identification by Berwick. Back Row – Firth Burton, Frank Thomas, anon, Jack Harris, Donald Berwick, anon, Fred Heardman, Harry Gilliatt, Tom Arnfield, Nicholas Freedman. Front Row – Bill Richards, Eustace Thomas (note stiff collar, tie and waistcoat!), Edgar Prior, Harold Gerrard.
69. Walter Riley. Photo: Frank Solari.







**A Short History of the Rucksack Club 1902 - 1939**  
***A Reprinting of the Works of Byrom and Brockbank***  
***Prepared by Roger Booth, Mike Dent and John Payne***

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